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SPEECH

OF

# HON. L. W. POWELL, OF KENTUCKY,

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 14, 1862.

The Senate having under consideration the resolution for the expulsion of Mr. POWELL, reported upon adversely by the Committee on the Judiciary—

Mr. POWELL said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: I had hoped that after the Judiciary Committee had made their report, the vote would be taken without any discussion. I at least, on my part, after the report of that committee, was willing that the vote should be taken without saying a word on the subject. But after the very extraordinary speech of my colleague, I am compelled, in my own defense, to make a reply. I trust, sir, that in the reply which I shall make, I shall be governed by feelings of just consideration to the Senate, that I shall approach the subject calmly, dispassionately, and seriously, duly impressed with the solemn circumstances by which I am surrounded, and the awful consequences to me individually of the action of the Senate.

My colleague was kind enough in the very lengthy, and I must say somewhat bitter, speech that he delivered, to speak kindly of me, personally. For that, I thank him. I shall not, I trust, be governed by that impetuosity of temper, if not bitterness of feeling, that characterized my colleague. My colleague's conduct in this whole matter has been, I confess, somewhat astonishing to me; yet I have no complaints to make of it. He has rights here as much as any other individual Senator. I accord to him most cheerfully all his rights and privileges. He stated to the Senate that this was a very unpleasant duty he had to perform. I hope that it was unpleasant, notwithstanding my colleague's disclaimer—his bearing, his manner, his temper, indicated to my mind that he was engaged in what to him was a work of love. But, Mr. President, there is a way of performing unpleasant duties that sometimes disarms them of a great deal of their apparent harshness.

My colleague is the author of the resolution. It is before me now in his own handwriting. [Mr. DAVIS assented.] It was presented, however, by another Senator. I have no complaint against the honorable Senator who presented it, because my colleague is presumed to know all the facts connected with this matter better than any other Senator, or at least the action of the State of Kentucky; and, as he makes the charges, I do not attach the least blame to any Senator for presenting the resolution. I think, however, my colleague acted a little ungenerously in this, that while he was laboriously engaged in drawing up his bill of indictment, he did not notify me of the fact. The first intimation I had of it was when the resolution was presented by the honorable Senator from Minnesota; and I must confess that when I looked at it at the Clerk's desk and found it to be in my colleague's handwriting, I was somewhat amazed. I thought courtesy at least to a colleague would have induced the Senator to notify me of what he proposed to do. He did not do it. The case went to the Committee on the Judiciary; and, as the honorable Senator from Illinois, the chairman of that committee, announced, I did promptly, and I trust delicately, ask the committee to give it the earliest possible attention. Before that committee, however, had time to conclude their investigation, such was the hot haste and zeal of my colleague, that he publicly in the Senate Chamber demanded of the committee to know why they had not reported, or at least urged them to report as speedily as possible. They did report that the resolution ought not to pass; and the very day that they made the report, my colleague notified the Senate that he would move on the next day to take it up. It did strike me that if my colleague had been governed by that courtesy which I am sure I would have extended to him, he would have come to me and consulted with me as to whether it would be convenient for me to have it taken up the next day or not; but he said not a word to me about it.

Of all this I do not complain, because I have been always ready to meet the charges. Conscious of my innocence, I felt that I could successfully meet them before any intelligent and impartial tribunal at any moment; and hence I have been prepared for the conflict from the very first day the resolution was introduced; for

"Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just."

I merely mention these things in passing; and I now notify my colleague that if ever I shall be under the painful necessity of making any assault upon him, in any way whatever, I will never do it through another. If I shall ever think it is my duty to do it, I will notify him of the fact, and I will do it in my own proper person. That is the way I will treat him. My sense of justice to a

"That is the neutrality of Kentucky, and that I understand to be the reason why she assumes to be neutral. It is the first time in the history of that proud Commonwealth that she ever failed to respond to the call upon the country for volunteers; she never was called upon to fight a public and foreign enemy that her true and gallant sons did not rush to the standard of the country in numbers so great that many had to be turned back. In other wars, in the war of 1812, and the war with Mexico, twenty times more men than could be taken were presented; and she would be ready to do it again, if it were a war against a foreign enemy; but she has no desire to shed the blood of a brother, whether of the North or South. I think her position is one that should be admired and esteemed by all patriotic men, by all Christian men, by all men who love their country and love the Union.

"She stands in an attitude, if possible, of a peacemaker, between the belligerents North and South, and I hope she may be permitted to maintain that attitude. It was one *not taken out of any hostility to the Government*; she took it because she believed it was the only means possible by which those difficulties could be averted, our country saved, the Union restored, and our people once more made prosperous, contented, and happy.

"I am aware that the position of my State is not palatable to gentlemen who rush fiercely on to this war. I am aware also that persons in the extreme South, perhaps, are not satisfied with the condition of Kentucky. They think we ought to unsheathe our sword at once, and make common quarrel with them. We have chosen to act differently, and we will, with the blessing of God, maintain our position of neutrality. This immense armament called out by the President looked to us as if this were to be a war of subjugation, and not one in defense of the public property. For that, in addition to the other reasons I have stated, we wished to present, if possible, a barrier between the fierce conflicting elements North and South, and restore peace to this country."

That was the neutrality of which I was the advocate, and I thought that the whole people of Kentucky who assumed it were alike honest with myself. I knew the position was somewhat anomalous, and I told some of my Union friends that I feared we should not be able to maintain it; but I said to them, "as you have taken it, for the peace of the State, for the common good, I will coöperate with you." I did coöperate and went not a whit further than the Union party went, as I will show you, though my colleague seems now to think, indeed declares, that they were not in earnest but were fixing up some clap-trap to cheat the people. If so, they deluded me on their platform, and because I went upon it and advocated it, as I always advocate everything, in public or private life, honestly, they want to sacrifice me. That is the truth, and I will make it manifest here. That is the only time I ever thought I was acting politically with my colleague; and it seems I was utterly mistaken in that; that I have been made the dupe, that I have been deceived by the artifice, insincerity, and political juggling of my colleague and those with whom he acted.

If my colleague wishes the extensive popularity which he imputes to me—a popularity I do not claim to have—I will say, that if he will act as I have acted in this and all other matters, consistently, with integrity, with honest directness, the noble people of Kentucky will sustain him. If I have any popularity, I got it in that way. I never, never attempted to deceive them in anything. I do not claim the popularity that my colleague imputes to me; but if I have it, it is because I have been true and faithful to the people, uttered my convictions honestly, without fear and without favor. I have announced them and carried them out as far as I could, consistently with public duty and public interest.

My colleague pronounced his usual philippic against the Breckinridge Democracy. Because Breckinridge has gone with the southern confederacy he seems to think that he can overwhelm any opponent by announcing that he has been of that party. I saw no necessity for his thrice-uttered philippic here against the Breckinridge party. It is true, Senators, that in my State, and perhaps in other States, many of those who supported Major Breckinridge for the Presidency are in the southern confederacy. It is also true that many who coöperated with my colleague and supported John Bell are there. I do not suppose my colleague is responsible because John Bell is in the confederate cause. He certainly should not make me responsible because Breckinridge is on that side, unless he takes the responsibility to himself because Bell is there. Breckinridge went there; I did not. Bell went; my colleague did not. What is the logic of that rule? I know that some of the most distinguished men of both the Douglas and the Bell party in Kentucky are with that confederation. The gentleman singled out a few Breckinridge men in the Legislature, upon whom he pronounced a glowing eulogy. I suppose they voted for him for Senator. I know those members of the Legislature to whom my colleague referred. They are honorable, worthy, and talented gentlemen. Why, sir, a distinguished gentleman, who pronounced himself a little while before that an unconditional Union man, in the gentleman's own neighborhood, Colonel Hanson, one of the most distinguished of the Bell men, by the by, a gentleman of ability and of talents and courage, was, unfortunately for himself, captured at the head of his regiment at Fort Donelson. Then there was another distinguished Union Bell friend, one of his electors, who is now a member of the confederate congress, Colonel Crockett, another gentleman of ability and valor from the town in which I myself live. Is my colleague responsible for these things? Certainly not. Why then, does he attempt to attach responsibility to me because of the action of the Breckinridge Democracy. That is all bosh, fustian-stuff. There is nothing in it. In these times it is as much as a man can do to take care of himself.

My colleague told the Senate, too, that my associates and myself are responsible for the devastation of a large portion of Kentucky. I was amazed when my colleague made that announcement. How I could be responsible, when from the beginning, as the Senate know, I have been for peace? I have been opposed to the war, and for that offense my colleague wishes me expelled from the Senate; for that is the charge, that I have been opposed to coercion. In every act of my life, in this whole connection, I have opposed the war, and striven in Kentucky, in mass meetings and otherwise, to keep the peace—to keep the hostile armies of the confederate States and of the United States from our borders. Then, how could I be responsible? I was really amazed. I could not tell; I did not know by what logic or what deduction of reasoning my colleague could make me responsible for the invasion of Kentucky. I can tell my col-

league that when the passions of the day shall have subsided and reason shall have resumed its throne, and this whole affair shall be calmly investigated, the responsibility for the invasion of Kentucky will attach to others than myself. It will attach to those who got on this neutrality platform for the purpose of diverting the attention of the people, who were not in earnest about it, and who then went about organizing camps of Federal soldiers at Camp Dick Robinson and other places. In my judgment, the responsibility for this war in Kentucky attaches to them. I will not charge it upon anybody; but I know that I had nothing to do with it, for I was opposed from the beginning to the war being brought into Kentucky. I tried to avert it. I tried in my place in the Senate, as I shall presently show, to settle these difficulties by conciliation, by compromise. I failed. I then assumed neutrality along with the Senator's party. That was overthrown against my earnest protest, and how he can possibly make me responsible for the introduction of hostile troops into Kentucky, I am at a loss to know. I know that I am in no way responsible for it; and I do not fear to meet the people of Kentucky to discuss before them the whole matter.

My colleague, in commenting on one of the resolutions of that little county meeting in Henderson, made a singular announcement; but it was only singular in view of what I had known to be the political history of my colleague. The statement to which I allude was, that he had always been an unconditional Union man. I have here the proceedings of a meeting at which my colleague was present, that I will read to the Senate, and I will read some of the resolutions of the meeting, and then I will ask the Senate how the resolutions reported by my colleague as chairman of the committee, and which it was said were passed unanimously by a large mass meeting, comport with his declaration that he has always been an unconditional Union man. I allude to resolutions adopted by the Union State conventions held in Louisville, on the 8th of January, 1861. I take them up at this time, because I wish to place before the Senate in a consecutive manner the action of the Union party on the neutrality question. That action of course commenced after the President issued his proclamation for seventy-five thousand men on the 15th of April; but as these conventions were anterior to that time, I allude to them now. I wish to show where my colleague and the Union men of Kentucky then stood. I was at that time in the Senate Chamber, fighting for the Crittenden compromise, as the Senate know, and was exerting every effort I possibly could to have it passed, and to have our difficulties settled amicably, peaceably, without war, in order to avoid bloodshed and the final disruption of the Union:

"The following resolutions were reported to the Union Democratic State convention by a committee composed of the following gentlemen: Governor Dixon"—

Now a distinguished Union man, my intimate, personal friend, once a member of the Senate, who lives in the same village in which I reside—

"William G. Thompson, Judge Barbee, J. P. Barbour, Alexander Luske, John Jackson, V. B. Young, T. L. Jones, J. F. Bullitt"—

Now one of our supreme judges—

"And to the Union State convention by the following committee: Hon. Garrett Davis, Hon. Joshua F. Bell"—

The gentleman who my colleague said, if he had been elected Governor would have given troops—

"J. L. Shackleford, John W. Crockett"—

A gentleman who is now in the confederate congress—

"W. L. Underwood, Z. Wheat, Thomas W. Riley, William C. Goodloe, Orlando Brown, J. B. Huston, and James Taylor."

The Senate will notice in this committee some of the most distinguished gentlemen in Kentucky. Joshua F. Bell is an ex-member of Congress, and was the late candidate of the gentleman's party for Governor. Warner L. Underwood was recently a member of the other House. Z. Wheat is an ex-judge of our supreme court. Thomas W. Riley is a distinguished attorney. William C. Goodloe is at present one of the circuit judges of Kentucky. Orlando Brown is the late secretary of state and a distinguished politician. J. B. Huston is now one of the most distinguished Union men in the Kentucky Legislature.

The Senate may think it strange that there were two committees there, but I will explain that. The Douglas men and the Bell men both had conventions in the city of Louisville on the same day; they met in different halls; but they agreed through the instrumentality of committees upon the same resolutions; and hence it is said "they were reported to their respective conventions by the separate committees, and unanimously adopted." These resolutions go on to treat generally of our difficulties, of the aggressions of the North, and expressed very great devotion to the Union. They then copy the entire Crittenden amendments to the Constitution, and proceed to resolve as follows:

"*Resolved*, That we recommend to the Legislature of the State to put these amendments in form and submit them to the other States, and that if the disorganization of the present Union is not arrested, the States agreeing to these amendments of the Federal Constitution shall form a separate confederacy, with power to admit new States under our glorious Constitution thus amended."

Senators, you see that my colleague, as chairman of a committee composed of the most distinguished citizens of the State, reported a resolution as early as the 8th of January, 1861, in which they say that if the States do not take the Crittenden compromise, and the disorganization of the Union is not arrested, they recommend to the Kentucky Legislature, which was then in session or about to convene, to put it in form and submit it to the States, and that such States as adopted it should form a separate confederacy, with power to admit new States. That is the unconditional unionism of my colleague. Certainly he has shown nothing that I have ever had anything to do with, so direct as that.

While I produce this resolution here, and show the character of the men who attended that meeting and passed it, I do not intend to charge my colleague with disloyalty; neither do I intend to charge it upon any of the distinguished gentlemen who participated in that meeting. I believe they are loyal men; I believe they are Union men; for

they expressed their attachment to the Union in these very resolutions, as I before stated; but there was a contingency in their unionism. My colleague asked the Legislature of Kentucky to pass the Crittenden amendments to the Constitution, invite the coöperation of other States, and then to form a new Union upon the Constitution thus amended. That is a kind of unconditional unionism that I do not understand. If I had been in that meeting, I have no doubt that my colleague would have had it in his charges, and for that he would have asked that I be driven, dishonored, disgraced from the Senate because I was disloyal; but when he and his Union friends do it, it is all right. They are to receive the plaudits, I suppose, of a grateful people for doing that, which if I had done he would say should stamp me with eternal infamy. That was at an early time in this revolution, before the war had commenced—before a gun was fired, when the flag of the Union still waved over Fort Sumter—even at that early day my colleague had a condition in his unionism.

In the resolution just read, my colleague and his friends declare their intention and purpose, if the disorganization of the Union is not arrested, to break up the old Union and to form a new one. So far from being unconditional Union men, they distinctly avow their intention, in a certain contingency, which is set forth in the resolution, to form a new Union. They were for abandoning the old Union before a gun had been fired in its defense. The disorganization of which they spoke has not been arrested. The Crittenden amendments have been adopted by no States. With a full knowledge of these facts, my colleague yesterday distinctly told the Senate that he had always been an unconditional Union man. I will make no comments upon his sincerity or consistency; let the facts speak for themselves.

These distinguished gentlemen said further in their resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That we deplore the existence of a Union to be held together by the sword, with laws to be enforced by standing armies. It is not such a Union as our fathers intended, and not worth preserving."

That was the language of the Bell men and the Douglas men in Louisville in mass meeting. Yet the gentleman arraigns me for opposing coercion. They pronounced themselves against any such thing, and said that a Union held together by force was not worth preserving. He has introduced some resolutions in his charges against coercion, passed by political meetings attended by me, and asks that I be driven from the Senate because I advocated them and was opposed to coercion. My colleague has been very eulogistic of himself and the Union party of Kentucky; and he asks my condemnation and expulsion from the Senate for advocating the very principle set forth in the resolution last read, which was passed unanimously in mass meeting by himself and friends. What think you, Senators, of my colleague's sense of justice?

I introduce these matters for the purpose of showing what was the public mind of Kentucky. When I was urging the integrity of the Union, and not intimating that in any contingency I was for dissolution, my colleague and his friends were engaged in mass meeting, sending forth to the country and to the world resolutions that if the States did not take the Crittenden amendments, they were for uniting only the States that would adopt them, with power to admit new States, and turning the States that would not adopt the Crittenden amendments out of the Union. I am sorry my colleague did not think of these things when he was arraigning me for disloyalty to the Union.

I now ask the indulgence of the Senate while I show by the resolutions of the Union men of Kentucky, by their addresses, and by their legislative resolves, that they were in favor of neutrality, that they did approve the action of Governor Magoffin in refusing troops in obedience to the call of the President. I hold in my hand the Louisville Democrat of the 19th of April last, containing the proceedings of a Union meeting held in the city of Louisville on the previous evening. It is headed:

"Great meeting. Kentucky to stand neutral in the Union. Hands off on both sides. Five thousand Union men. Eloquent speeches by Hon. James Guthrie, Ex-Senator Dixon, Hon. John Young Brown, and Judge Bullock. Resolutions worthy of Kentucky."

I will read to the Senate some of the resolutions of this meeting: and I will hand to the reporter, to be published as an appendix to my speech, the whole resolutions and proceedings of the meetings to which I may allude, this among others, because I wish to make a record of them that the people of Kentucky may in after time know who it was that inaugurated neutrality, and who it was that stood upon it, and who it was that abandoned it. The meeting was organized by calling Judge Pirtle to the chair.

"Hon. Nat. Wolfe moved the appointment of a committee on resolutions, and the following gentlemen were accordingly appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sentiments and sense of the meeting. Nat. Wolfe, Lovel Rosseau, [now General Rosseau,] Joseph Speed, G. A. Houghton, J. H. Harney, [the editor of the Louisville Democrat,] and Judge Bullock."

The committee reported a series of resolutions, from which I will read a few extracts:

"3. That as we oppose the call of the President for volunteers for the purpose of coercing the seceded States, so we oppose the raising of troops in this State to coöperate with the southern confederacy." * * * *

"6. That the present duty of Kentucky is to maintain her present independent position, taking sides not with the Administration nor with the seceding States, but with the Union against them both, declaring her soil to be sacred from the hostile tread of either, and if necessary, to make the declaration good with her strong right arm."

That was the meeting which inaugurated neutrality. The gentleman censures the resolutions of the meeting at which I was present, held afterwards, because they said that if the forces of either belligerent came upon the State, they should be expelled. Here the Union men of Louisville, at the very time they inaugurated neutrality, declared that they would make it good by the strong right arm. What did that mean? That they would maintain the neutrality by force, if needs be. It meant nothing else. I will read another resolution of that meeting:

"7. That to the end Kentucky may be fully prepared for any contingency, we would have her arm herself thoroughly, at the earliest practicable moment, by regular legal action."

Yes, they wished to have the State armed for the purpose of maintaining her neutrality by their good right arms. Now, let me read a few extracts from the speeches delivered before that meeting. Hon. James Guthrie addressed the meeting. He said:

"Now, in the action of the southern confederacy and that of Mr. Lincoln, the friends of both parties find excuses for them; but when it was the peace of the country and the saving it from war and bloodshed, then there should have been no interference of etiquette to prevent such a dreadful calamity. Kentucky spoke as her statesmen have always spoken, of conciliation, peace, harmony, and a final settlement. But war has been inaugurated. Fort Sumter has fallen. The President has issued a proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand men; but he has not told us what he is going to do with them. Is he going to retake Fort Sumter? Is he going to defend Fort Pickens? If so, why does he congregate them at Washington?"

* * * * * * * * *

"I want Kentucky to take her stand for peace, and appeal to that still, small voice in the North crying for peace. There are religious men from habit, education, and from profession, whose hearts, when Kentucky calls for peace, will be reached, and whose voice will reach the powers that be, and we will have peace."

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"We have asked the South to stay their hands, for we had a great stake in this Government, and they have not. We plead with Lincoln for peace, and have not been hearkened to. Shall we be hearkened to in the din of arms? There will be a time when Kentucky's voice, if she stands firm on her own soil, fighting with neither section will be heard by millions of people of the free States who will hearken to us and say, 'Why should there be strife between us and you?'

"Let us stand boldly and fearlessly, as is characteristic of Kentuckians, and cry peace! Hold fast to that we know to be good, and let those men who want to make the experiment of secession go as individual amateurs, and find congenial spirits for their work."

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"If the North comes to ravage our land, we will meet them as Kentuckians always meet their foes. We will meet them as Kentuckians should meet them, so long as there is a tree for a fortification or a foot of land for a freeman to stand upon."

You see that Mr. Guthrie, who is a Union man, and who in that speech expressed his devotion to the Union, declared himself in favor of neutrality. In the resolutions of that meeting they declared their ardent attachment to the Union, but were still in favor of neutrality, and of maintaining it with their own right arm. Governor Dixon also made a speech at that meeting, from which I shall read a brief extract:

"We do not mean to submit to Lincoln. He has commanded us to send troops. We sent word that Kentucky will not do it. Will he compel us? Let him not dare it. Let him not rouse the sleeping lioness of the border States. She sleeps now, still and quiet, but it is not from lack of strength, courage, or power. She waits for the assault. Let it come, and roused she will crush the power that assails, and drag Mr. Lincoln from his high place. Can he make Kentucky help him kill? He has a right to demand troops, and he did. Glendower could, as he said, call spirits from the vasty deep, but would they come when they were called? Will the troops from Kentucky come at his call? No; they will never lend themselves to such a cause.

"But Kentucky will stand firm with her sister border States in the center of the Republic, to calm the distracted sections. This is her true position, and in it she saves the Union and frowns down secession."

There is certainly nothing in the resolutions read by my colleague more pointed than these resolutions of the first meeting in Kentucky that inaugurated neutrality—a Union meeting. I will next read an extract from the address of the Union central committee to the people of Kentucky, issued on the 17th of April:

"The alliance between party spirit and the sectional question of slavery has at length produced the legitimate fruit of such a combination. Disunion and war are upon the land. No further retrospect is necessary for the purposes of this brief address. The past is understood. We here propose to touch alone upon the present and the future.

"A condition of hostilities, as is known, exists between the seceding States and the national Government, springing immediately from the seizure by the former of one of the national forts. The President, in view of this seizure, and of the kindred acts committed previously by the seceding States, and of the secession out of which the acts have grown, has published a proclamation calling forth the militia of the several States of the Union to suppress what he describes as 'combinations too powerful to be suppressed in the ordinary way,' and to 'execute the laws,' appealing at the same time to 'all loyal citizens to facilitate and aid this effort to maintain the laws and the integrity of the national Union and the perpetuity of popular governments, and redress wrongs that have long been endured.' Kentucky, through her Executive, has already, we understand, responded to this appeal. She has refused to comply with it. And in this refusal she has acted as became her. *We approve the response of the Executive of the Commonwealth.* One other appeal now demands a response from Kentucky.

"The Government of the Union has appealed to her to furnish men to suppress the revolutionary combinations in the cotton States. She has refused; she has most wisely and justly refused. Seditious leaders in the midst of us now appeal to her to furnish men to uphold those combinations against the Government and the Union. Will she comply with this appeal? Ought she to comply with it? We answer, with emphasis, no.

"If a conviction that the policy of coercion is wild and suicidal, promising only to deluge the land in blood and dissolve the Union irretrievably in the crimson tide, is a good reason, as it is, for Kentucky to withhold her countenance and aid from the effort of the Government to suppress by force the revolutionary combinations of the Gulf, surely her allegiance, undimmed as yet by a solitary blur, her own sovereign interest, and the all but equal interest of the combatants themselves in the maintenance of her present independent relations towards both of them, and finally, the sacred and over-arching interest of the national peace and of the national life, are good reasons, nay, unanswerable and decisive ones, for Kentucky, as the case now presents itself, to decline to draw the sword in behalf of the seceding States against the Government of the Union."

There they denounce the doctrine of coercion as "wild and suicidal;" yet my colleague arraigns me most fiercely upon an extract he read from a speech of mine in the Senate, in which I opposed the war and opposed the whole policy of coercion. For that, forsooth, he says I should be driven from the Senate, though in the very extract he read there was coupled with that, the declaration that I opposed coercion because I thought it would lead to permanent disunion, that I was for the Union, and I believed coercion would destroy it. It was my love of Union that caused me to oppose coercion, as I distinctly stated. Here the Union central committee concur with me, and yet my colleague eulogizes them and condemns me. Is it because I am a Democrat, and have been a Breckinridge Democrat? I trust my colleague is not so prejudiced as to suppose that that which is good in others is bad in me; but that is the logic of his position. In this address, the Union central committee say further:

"The present duty of Kentucky is to maintain her present independent position, taking sides not with the Government and not with the seceding States, but with the Union against them both, declaring her soil to be sacred from the hostile tread of either, and, if necessary, make the declaration good with her strong right arm. And to the end that she may be fully prepared for this last contingency we

would have her arm herself thoroughly at the earliest practical moment.

"What the future duty of Kentucky may be, we, of course, cannot with certainty foresee, but if the enterprise announced in the proclamation of the President should at any time hereafter assume the aspect of a war for the overrunning and subjugation of the seceding States through the full assertion therein of the national jurisdiction by a standing military force, we do not hesitate to say that Kentucky should promptly unsheathe her sword in behalf of what will have then become her common cause."

The Union central committee were not unconditionally for the Union, it seems, any more than my colleague and his committee were on the 8th of January previous:

"Such an event, if it should occur, of which we confess there does not appear to be a rational probability, could have but one meaning—a meaning which a people jealous of their liberty would be keen to detect, and which a people worthy of liberty would be prompt and fearless to resist. When Kentucky detects this meaning in the action of the Government, she ought, without counting the cost, to take up arms at once against the Government. Until she does detect this meaning, she ought to hold herself independent of both sides, and compel both sides to respect the inviolability of her soil."

That address of the Union central committee was signed by J. H. Harney, W. F. Bullock, G. D. Prentice, (editor of the Louisville Journal,) James Speed, (now a distinguished member of the Senate of Kentucky,) Charles Ripley, W. P. Boone, P. Tompert, H. Pope, Nat. Wolfe, and L. E. Harvie. Certainly nothing the Senator has produced from me is stronger or more pointed than this address of the Union committee; and yet he eulogizes the conduct of his Union friends and censures mine most severely.

I have shown you, Senators, what was the action of the Union party of Kentucky, by their resolutions and addresses and speeches. Now, allow me to show you their action in the Kentucky Legislature. I wish the dates to be borne in mind, and in the end you will see whether I misrepresented the wishes of the people of Kentucky or not. On the 22d of January, 1861, the lower House of the Kentucky Legislature passed these resolutions:

"*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That this General Assembly has heard with profound regret of the resolutions recently adopted by the States of New York, Ohio, Maine, and Massachusetts, tendering men and money to the President of the United States, to be used in coercing sovereign States of the South into obedience to the Federal Government.

"*Resolved*, That this General Assembly receives the action of the Legislatures of New York, Ohio, Maine, and Massachusetts as the indication of a purpose upon the part of the people of those States to further complicate existing difficulties by forcing the people of the South to the extremity of submission or resistance; and so regarding it, the Governor of the State of Kentucky is hereby requested to inform the Executives of each of said States that it is the opinion of this General Assembly that whenever the authorities of these States shall send armed forces to the South for the purpose indicated in said resolutions, the people of Kentucky, uniting with their brethren of the South, will, as one man, resist such invasion of the soil of the South, at all hazards and to the last extremity."

The first of these resolutions was adopted by a vote of yeas 92, nays 0; and the second by a vote of yeas 87, nays 6. My colleague may say that this was before the present Legislature was elected; but allow me to tell him that Mr. Nat. Wolfe, Mr. Buckner, the present Speaker, and many other Union men in that Legislature, who voted for the resolutions, are in the present Legislature. Then they passed a resolution recommending the calling of a national convention, and a resolution appointing commissioners to the peace conference. The resolutions I first read only passed one House; but the following resolutions were passed by both Houses, and approved by the Governor on the 11th of February, 1861:

"*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That the people of Kentucky view, with the most lively apprehension, the dangers that now environ the Union and threaten its perpetuity.

"*Resolved*, That we appeal to our southern brethren to stay the work of secession—to return and make one mighty effort to perpetuate the noble work of our forefathers, hallowed by the recollection of a thousand noble deeds.

"*Resolved*, That we protest against the use of force or coercion by the General Government against the seceding States, as unwise and inexpedient, and tending to the destruction of our common country."

There is a resolve, passed by both Houses of the Legislature and approved by the Governor, against coercion as pointedly as any sentiment I ever uttered in this Hall or elsewhere. That was passed, you will remember, February 11, 1861. The next resolution is in favor of the call of a national convention to settle our difficulties.

Then in April the Legislature passed an act to provide for the election of delegates to the border State convention to be held at Frankfort.

Now, I will bring the record down to May, 1861. That was after the President had issued his proclamation. On the 16th of May the Committee on Federal Relations of the House reported the following resolutions, which were proposed by one of the most distinguished Union men in the Legislature, an ex-member of this body, Judge Underwood, and reported by the Committee on Federal Relations:

"Considering the deplorable condition of the country, and for which the State of Kentucky is in no way responsible, and looking to the best means of preserving the internal peace, and securing the lives, liberty, and property of the citizens of the State: Therefore,

"*Resolved by the House of Representatives*, That this State and the citizens thereof shall take no part in the civil war now being waged, except as mediators and friends to the belligerent parties; and that Kentucky should, during the contest, occupy the position of strict neutrality; and your committee unanimously recommend the adoption of the following resolutions."

There, sir, they take the position of "strict neutrality." What is strict neutrality? It is that you will stand indifferent; that you will furnish no aid of any kind whatsoever to either of the belligerent parties. That is the meaning of it, and that is all it can mean:

"*Resolved*, That the act of the Governor in refusing to furnish troops or military force upon the call of the executive authority of the United States, under existing circumstances, is approved."

Yes, sir, the Kentucky Legislature, in May, after the issuing of the President's proclamation, resolved to stand upon the doctrine of strict neutrality, and they approved of the action of the Governor of the Commonwealth in refusing to send troops upon the call of the President. The first of those resolutions was adopted by a vote of 69 yeas to 26 nays, and the second by a vote of 89 yeas to 4 nays. Out of the whole body there were but four who did not vote to approve the act of the Governor in refusing troops to the President.

Well, sir, the above series of resolutions were adopted by the lower House of the Kentucky Legislature. The Senate, on the 24th of May, 1861, passed the following resolutions by a vote of 13 yeas to 9 nays, enunciating similar doctrine in different words:

"Whereas, there exists a civil war between the national Government and the seceded States, which Kentucky deeply deplores; a war she had no voice in creating, and in which she has hitherto refused to take part, and she now refuses. Being a part of the national Government, in the enjoyment of its benefits—such as mail facilities, national hospitals, Federal courts, protection at home and abroad, a garrison paid out of the national Treasury, into which she is paying revenue—and having a representation in Congress, Kentucky ought, at least, to remain neutral till the end of the controversy; neither hindering the national Government in the exercise of its authority, nor furnishing men, as a State, to either of the belligerents; nor asking aid from either to maintain her position; she will, all the time, be ready and anxious to mediate between the belligerents, and will be profoundly happy, should she be able to reconcile the contending parties, and arrest the shedding of fraternal blood by fraternal hands. With this position, Kentucky is willing to go before the civilized world, and let her conduct pass into history, and await the candid and calm judgment of future and disinterested generations. Being connected with the seceded States geographically, and having the same domestic institution, she is unwilling to take up arms against them. Being attached to the national Government under which she has always lived and greatly prospered, and having no cause for war against it, she cannot take up arms to overthrow it. Having, in good faith, taken this position, she asked the belligerents to respect it: Therefore,

"1. *Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That Kentucky will not sever her connection with the national Government, nor will she take up arms for either of the belligerent parties, but will arm herself for the one purpose of preserving tranquillity and peace within her own borders.

"2. *Resolved*, That Kentucky now tenders, and to the end of the war, all the time, will tender herself as mediator, and that she will constantly be ready to do all in her power to bring about a just and honorable peace.

"3. *Resolved*, That the Governor be directed to transmit a copy of the foregoing preamble and resolutions to the Presidents of the United States and of the seceded States, and to the Governors of each of the thirty-four States."

Mr. President, at the extra session of Congress, when I gave the votes and made the speeches of which my colleague and the Kentucky Legislature complain, I stood here upon the platform of Kentucky, as announced by her Union men in convention, by speeches, by addresses, and by legislative resolves. I stood here to advocate and did advocate the very doctrine that she said in the most solemn and formal manner should be advocated; and for that I am to be driven from the Senate by my colleague. Was there ever in the history of a public man such an unjustifiable assault upon him for doing that which the very party making the assault said should have been done? The Legislature ask me to resign for acting in obedience to their expressed will; and my colleague appears here and assumes the character of prosecutor in their behalf. I do not believe that the representatives of Kentucky ever desired or delegated to him the power to appear here as my prosecutor—he of his own volition assumes the task.

I hold in my hand the address of the delegates of the border State convention to the people of the United States. I wish to make this record complete, for I want to make but one vindication to the people of Kentucky. I know that when the whole facts are known, the honest, the brave, the true-hearted, noble men of Kentucky will sustain my action. They will say that I did right, that I acted in obedience to the public will of Kentucky, and that I did not misrepresent them. The border State convention published two addresses; one of them to the people of the United States, signed by J. J. Crittenden, James Guthrie, H. R. Gamble, W. A. Hall, J. B. Henderson, William G. Pomeroy—the last four are from Missouri—R. K. Williams, Archibald Dixon, F. M. Bristow, Joshua F. Bell, C. A. Wickliffe, G. W. Dunlap, J. F. Robinson, John B. Huston, Robert Richardson, and John Caldwell of Tennessee. I will read an extract from that address to the people of the United States:

"Our States desire and have indicated a purpose to take no part in this war, and we believe that in this course we will ultimately best serve the interests of our common country. It is impossible that we should be indifferent spectators; we consider that our interests would be irretrievably ruined by taking part in the conflict on the side where the strongest sympathies of our people are, and that our sense of honor and of duty requires that we should not allow ourselves to be drawn or driven into a war in which other States, without consulting us, have deliberately chosen to involve themselves. Our safety and our dignity, as among the most powerful of the slave States, demand of us that we take this position.

"If the time shall come when our friendly mediation may arrest the further progress of the strife, our most earnest and strenuous efforts shall not be wanting to bring about peace, and it is by such efforts that we hope to serve the interests of our country."

I shall now read a few extracts from the address of that border State convention to the people of Kentucky. This address is signed by John J. Crittenden, James Guthrie, R. K. Williams, Archibald Dixon, F. M. Bristow, Joshua F. Bell, C. A. Wickliffe, G. W. Dunlap, C. S. Morehead, J. F. Robinson, John B. Huston, and Robert Richardson—all distinguished names among Kentucky politicians. Mr. Bristow and Mr. Bell are ex-members of Congress; and Crittenden, Dunlap, and Wickliffe are now my honored colleagues in the other House; J. F. Robinson and John B. Huston are now distinguished members of the Legislature; and Robert Richardson is at present superintendent of public instruction in the State. What do they say on this question of neutrality, for which my colleague invokes my expulsion from the Senate?

"Your State, on a deliberate consideration of her responsibilities, moral, political, and social, has determined that the proper course for her to pursue is to take no part in the controversy between the Government and the seceded States but that of mediator and intercessor. She is unwilling to take up arms against her brethren residing either North or South of the geographical line by which they are unhappily divided into warring sections. This course was commended to her by every consideration of patriotism, and by a proper regard for her own security. It does not result from timidity; on the contrary, it could only have been adopted by a brave people—so brave that the least imputation on their courage would be branded as false by their written and traditional history."

Further on, they say:

"In declining to respond to a call made by the present Administration of the Government, and one that we have reason to believe would not have been made if the Administration had been fully advised of the circumstances by which we were surrounded, Kentucky did not put herself in factious opposition to her legitimate obligations; she did not choose to throw herself in hostile collision with the

slave States of Missouri, Maryland, and Delaware, which have not seceded on the one hand, nor the slave States which have and are in process of secession on the other, and shed the blood of brethren and kindred at the very moment when she was striving to be an apostle of peace. Nature herself revolted at the thought, and her conduct in this matter had so much of love to God and love to man in it, that it will meet the sanction of an approving world. So far from being denounced for this action, it is everywhere looked upon as an act of purest patriotism, resulting from imperious necessity and the highest instincts of self-preservation—respected by the very Administration that alone could have complained of it, and will, we doubt not, be ratified by it, if not in terms, at least by its future action. That fact did not take her out of the Union.

"Kentucky, in so grave a matter as this, passes by mere legal technicalities, and a discussion of theoretical difficulties of government, poises herself upon her right to do what the necessities of her condition imperatively demanded of her, and relies upon the good sense and magnanimity of her sister States, seeing that there is no parallel in her condition and theirs, to do her justice.

"In all things she is as loyal as ever to the constitutional administration of the Government. She will follow the stars and stripes to the utmost regions of the earth, and defend it from foreign insult. She refuses alliance with any who would destroy the Union. All she asks is permission to keep out of this unnatural strife. When called to take part in it, she believes that there is more honor in the breach than in the observance of any supposed duty to perform it.

"Feeling that she is clearly right in this, and has announced her intention to refrain from aggression upon others, she must protest against her soil being made the theater of military operations by any belligerent. The war must not be transferred by the warring sections from their own to her borders. Such unfriendly action cannot be viewed with indifference by Kentucky."

Why, sir, that is the doctrine that I have announced, and for which I am so harshly and bitterly censured by my colleague. I have read the distinguished names signed to this address; and right here allow me to defend one of those gentlemen from what, I have no doubt, was an unintentional assault by my colleague. I allude to Mr. Joshua F. Bell. My colleague, with stentorian voice and lusty lungs, announced that if Joshua F. Bell had been elected Governor instead of Magoffin, he would have furnished troops at the call of the President; that they were not furnished in consequence of the treason of the Governor. Why, sir, in this address, signed by him, Joshua F. Bell says the Governor did right; that Kentucky's position was right. I have known Mr. Bell for many years. In early life I was his school-mate in the university. I sat on the same benches with him. I have known him since. He is a talented, high-toned, and honorable gentleman. In my judgment, Joshua F. Bell would scorn to approve in another what he would not do himself. The fair inference is, that Mr. Bell, if he is an honorable gentleman, and I know him to be such, would have acted just as Magoffin acted; for he approved of Magoffin's action. I know my colleague did not intend to make any assault upon Mr. Bell, for I understand there are the most friendly relations between them.

I have now read to Senators the proceedings of the Legislature. I have still another action of theirs that I desire to present. The Kentucky Legislature in May last, in obedience to the resolves of these Union meetings—for they called upon them to do it—passed a law to organize her military. That law, as you will see, reiterates the very same idea on the subject of neutrality that is contained in the resolutions that I have read. I will read you the tenth section of that military law which was passed in May, 1861:

"Nothing contained in this act shall be so construed as to authorize said board, or any of the military organizations created by the militia law of this State, to use in any wise the arms and munitions of war herein authorized to be purchased, or those already belonging to the State, against the Government of the United States, nor against the confederate States, unless in protecting our soil from unlawful invasion, it being the intention alone that said arms and munitions of war are to be used for the sole defense of the State of Kentucky."

The law declared that the arms and munitions of war were not to be used against the confederate States, nor against the Federal Government, but in defense of Kentucky. That law was passed in obedience to the resolves of the Legislature of Kentucky, and particularly in accordance with the resolutions of my colleague's party in the State. Allow me to read another extract on this subject of neutrality. I have shown you, from their resolutions and addresses, that they meant just what I did by neutrality. Judge Underwood—well known to this Senate—wrote a letter on this subject of neutrality, dated Glasgow, June 6, 1861. I will read one short extract from that letter. Judge Underwood believed in the right to coerce a State, but in speaking of neutrality he said:

"Now, although my opinion as to the right of coercion remains unchanged, I have, from many considerations, too numerous to be here mentioned, come to the conclusion that Kentucky may properly refuse to participate in the war in progress. Hence I proposed that she should occupy the position of neutrality, believing she could thereby be more efficient in putting an end to the war, and restoring the Government to its legitimate action, than in any other way. Having taken that position, I think we are bound in honor to maintain it; after assuming to be neutral, if we join our forces with those of the national Government and aid in coercing the seceded States, we shall present ourselves before the world as an oscillating, undecisive, unreliable, and timid people; meriting ridicule and contempt, instead of respect and confidence. We can attract the admiration of mankind by taking a firm, immovable, and yet conciliatory stand."

That was the opinion of Hon. Joseph R. Underwood, once an eminent and distinguished member of this body, a gentleman eminent for ability, integrity, and worth, now a distinguished Union member of the Kentucky Legislature, on the subject of neutrality. My colleague must see then that all the Kentucky Union men were not like himself, that some of them were in earnest on this subject of neutrality, and meant what they said. I will read extracts from a speech of Hon. Archibald Dixon, delivered at Paducah, Kentucky, on the 9th of March, 1861. Mr. Dixon is a distinguished member of the Union party, a gentleman of talent and high position, having filled many offices of honor and trust in Kentucky; he was once a member of this body. He said:

"That the distracted condition of the country was not without cause. There was a cause, and that cause must be removed, or peace between the sections could never be restored.

"The people of the slave States had been wronged, grievously wronged by some of their brethren of the free States, but not by the Federal Government." * * * *

"The Black Republican party, led on by Lincoln, their President, Seward, and others, are enemies of the people of the South, and of their institutions; they alone are responsible for all the injuries of which the people of the southern States have just cause of complaint.

"It was this party that resisted the execution of the fugitive slave law; that organized and protected underground

railroads; that encouraged and aided its followers in stealing the negroes of the southern slaveholders; that gave countenance and support to such incendiaries and murderers as Helper and John Brown; that stirred up strife between master and slave." * * * * *

"But we are told that the Black Republican party has succeeded in electing a President and Vice President upon a principle purely sectional and hostile to the institutions of the slave States. This is true; and such a triumph, of such a party on such a principle, was and is an insult, not only to the people of the southern States, but to the conservative men of the whole nation.

"And if such a party after all that has occurred, is to be continued in power by the deliberate judgment and suffrages of the people of the free States, I think the sooner a separation upon just and amicable principles takes place between the sections the better for all parties. But before this takes place, I am for appealing directly to the people of the free States to turn this faction out of power and amend the Federal Constitution in such a way as to prevent a recurrence of similar difficulties, and afford to the people of the slave States such guarantees for the safety of their slave property, both in the States and Territories, as the necessities of the case may require.

"This, in my judgment, would be infinitely better for all parties than hastily and rashly to break up and destroy a Government, that if properly administered and properly appreciated by the American people, would be productive of more real and substantial blessings to those who live under it than any that ever existed or perhaps that ever will exist." * * * * "Are these States that have separated themselves from the Federal Union, because of wrongs and injuries done their citizens by the Black Republican party, to be forced and driven back into the confederacy by that party? And are the people of Kentucky to be compelled to enlist under the Black Republican banner and aid them in dishonoring and degrading those who have common sympathies and a common interest with them?

"I do not know that Mr. Lincoln means to attempt this. In his inaugural he says that the laws must be enforced in every State in the Union; but he could not have said less than this, as he is sworn to support the Constitution of the United States and to see that the laws are faithfully executed.

"This means, of course, that the revenue laws now existing in all the States shall be enforced; and it may be that not only existing, but all laws which a Black Republican Congress may pass, shall be; and it may be, in his judgment, his sworn duty to see that they are enforced.

"A Black Republican Congress passes a law to collect a direct tax, not only of the people of Kentucky, but of every other slave State, to raise money to support armies and navies to whip a seceding State back into the Union. Will Kentucky submit to such a tax? A Black Republican Congress passes a law to raise troops in Kentucky to compel Kentuckians to submit to Black Republican rule, or to aid the usurping Administration to whip sister slave States into subjection, or back into the Confederacy. Will Kentucky, with the lash of unprincipled faction suspended over her back, submit to such outrages, such wrong, such indignity? Will she suffer the foot of a Black Republican invader to desecrate her soil, whether the object of such invasion be the subjugation of her own brave and noble sons or of her brethren in her sister slave States? *Never, never.*" * * * * "Shall Kentucky, then, resist him if he attempts to compel her to aid him in coercing her sister slave States back into the Union? Of course she will. She considers him and his party enemies to the whole country; as disorganizers, usurpers, and destroyers of the liberty and peace of the nation. *How* will she resist him? By seceding from the Union, and surrendering all into his hands? In my judgment, this would be unworthy of the high character which Kentucky has always sustained for courage and chivalry. If she does not secede, what other course will she adopt to maintain her honor and protect her rights under the Constitution? I say, throw herself upon the resolutions of 1798, and, in her sovereign character, declare every law of Congress passed by the Republican party to coerce in any way seceding States unconstitutional and void. And if the President attempts to enforce any such laws after they have been declared by Kentucky unconstitutional and void, by raising money, by direct taxation of the people of Kentucky, or by compelling them to enlist under his banner, or marching his troops through her territories, let her meet him sword in hand, and appeal to the God of battles to determine the right between them.

"In this fight she will have as allies all the people of the slave States, and half or more of the people of the free States; for those opposed to Black Republicanism in the free States, hate it with a more undying hatred than even the people of the slave States.

"They have been faithful to us through all our conflicts, and are ready in a just cause to stand by us to the last extremity; and we ought not to desert them because temporarily borne down by the Republican faction, their enemies and ours. Let then the fight be, as it should be, with the Black Republican party, and not with the Government. It will be time enough to wage war against the Government, and separate ourselves from it, when the people of the free States, after having had a fair opportunity of voting on the great question of right, decide such question against us, and refuse us such guarantees as we have a right to demand of them. But this, in my opinion, they will never do. I have not always been an advocate of the principles contained in the resolutions of 1798; but the perils by which our State is now surrounded, and the necessity she may be under in a short time to choose between secession and nullification, have satisfied me that they are her last hope; and to save the State government from destruction, and the people from anarchy, and it may be from civil war, she must plant herself firmly upon them. If she does this, she will not be forced against her will into a conflict with either the North or South, but will have it in her power to act as mediator between them. She will not have to bear her portion of the tax on her property imposed by the southern confederacy, and which she would be compelled to do if she seceded from the Union and became a member of it, and which she would willingly do if she thought secession right or there was just cause for it. Nor would she be compelled to furnish men or money or arms against her own stern judgment of right to coerce such confederacy."

I have shown you, Senators, what was the action of public meetings and the Legislature of Kentucky on this subject. I shall now read one or two extracts from the leading political journals of Kentucky, to show that they took the same position. I will first read an extract from the Louisville Journal. It is but just to the editors of the Journal and the Louisville Democrat, extracts from which papers I propose to read, that I should state that I find these extracts taken from those journals in other papers. I tried to obtain a copy of their files, to see if they were correctly quoted, but was unable to find them. I believe they were properly and correctly extracted. The Louisville Journal, speaking of the President's proclamation calling for seventy-five thousand men, says:

"The policy announced in the proclamation deserves the unqualified condemnation of every American citizen. It is unworthy not merely of a statesman but of a man. It is a policy utterly hairbrained and ruinous. If Mr. Lincoln contemplated this policy in the inaugural address, he is a guilty dissembler; if he has conceived it under the excitement raised by the seizure of Fort Sumter, he is a guilty Hotspur. In either case, he is miserably unfit for the exalted position in which the enemies of the country have placed him."

Again, the Journal says—this was written, I suppose, in May last:

"In our judgment, the people of Kentucky have answered this question in advance; and the answer, expressed in every conceivable form of popular expression, and finally, clinched by the glorious vote of Saturday, is: arm Kentucky, efficiently but rightfully and fairly, with the clear declaration that the arming is not for offense against either the Government or the seceding States, but purely for defense against whatever power sets hostile foot upon the actual soil of the Commonwealth. In other words, the Legislature, according to the manifest will of the people, should declare the neutrality of Kentucky in this unnatural and accursed war of brothers, and equip the State for the successful maintenance of her position at all hazards. And when the Legislature shall have done this, it may, in our opinion, wisely adjourn, leaving the cause of peace and of constitutional Government, so far as Kentucky is concerned, in the hands of the twelve mediators whom the people of the Commonwealth have just chosen expressly for

that high custodianship. This, it seems to us, as it plainly seems to the people at large, is what the Legislature should now do."

That was soon after the election of delegates to the border State convention. I will now read some extracts from the Louisville Democrat:

"Let Kentucky preserve her neutrality, and she at once becomes the rallying point for patriots from all portions of the land Western Virginia, southern Ohio, southern Indiana, and southern Illinois will stand by her to a man, and we are very much mistaken if Tennessee will not heartily coöperate.

"Conservative men from all parts, both North and South, will join her standard to stay the fratricidal hand which is now being raised in anger and fury."—*Louisville Democrat, April* 19, 1861.

"One other feature of these speeches of Mr. Lincoln and we shall, for the present, have done with him. At Indianapolis he, by the most direct indirection, threatened the southern States with practical coercion, and the country with speedy civil war. At Pittsburg he distinctly stated that the Chicago platform, as regarded the tariff and slavery, would be sacred law to his administration, and at no other point has he retracted or essentially modified these positions or assertions. The country may, hereafter, regard coercion and no more slave territory as the settled policy of his administration. If it comes to that, and the issue is simply submission to that policy or disunion and war, Kentucky will accept the issue. And Mr. Lincoln might as well know, once for all, that Kentucky takes war with all its fearful consequences. And when war comes, no intelligent son of the Commonwealth can for a moment doubt in which direction the hostile batteries of Kentucky will be pointed, upon what soil the steady tramp of her invading battalions will be heard, or in whose bosoms the keen blades of her conquering swords will be flashed. Let Mr. Lincoln and his abolition myrmidons, who so valiantly press him on to 'no compromise' and war, consider well these things, and beware in time, while yet the dangers they suggest are not at their own doors."—*Louisville Democrat, February* 24, 1861.

"There are some principles born with the people of this country, or inculcated from the cradle, and one is, that all Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. When whole communities will not consent, what is to be done? Shall they be forced? We shall not discuss the right of secession. It does not come into the case. Deny it, and the difficulty remains. If whole communities are forced to submit, how shall it be said that the powers of the Government over them is derived from the consent of the governed? Besides, when war begins, where will it end? Will it not defeat forever the object, the restoration of this Union. We are satisfied it will. Time and the policy of conciliation will restore all that is lost. Force will destroy all hope of such a result.

"It is too late to talk of coercion in any shape; it is compromise or war if coercion is attempted. Lincoln must see this; and if he does not, his advisers, some of them, cannot fail to see it. We are told of the threats of those seceding States; but they threaten because they apprehend coercion."—*Louisville Democrat, February* 23, 1861.

Mr. Prentice and Mr. Harney, the editors of the Journal and Democrat, are both gentlemen of eminent ability, and have great influence in forming public opinion in Kentucky. Both of these journals at one time opposed coercion, and approved the action of the Governor in refusing to obey the call of the President for troops in April last.

I could give you several other extracts from the same papers, but I shall not take up the time of the Senate by doing so.

I have now shown you, Senators, distinctly the record of the Union party in Kentucky on this subject. I have shown it by their meetings, by their legislative resolves, by their addresses, and by their political journals. I have shown it to be precisely in accordance with the votes that I gave here at the called session of Congress; and yet my colleague says that I have misrepresented the people of Kentucky. What evidences have you of it, sir? Here were these resolves of the Legislature unrepealed at the time I cast those votes. Here were those resolutions and addresses of the Union mass meetings unrevoked. It was in accordance with those resolutions and with the express will of Kentucky, as declared by resolutions unrepealed on the statute-book, that I cast those votes in July last. I do not believe that the honest, bold, chivalrous people of Kentucky, when they see the whole facts, will be willing to censure me for doing what I had reason to believe was the will of the people of my State, expressed in every form in which the public will could be conveyed to a public servant.

The Senate will bear in mind the fact that it was not until after the 10th day of September last that the Legislature of Kentucky abandoned neutrality.

I regret very much while on this subject of neutrality that I have not a letter written by my colleague after he made a visit some time in April or May last to Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Warner L. Underwood, who visited the President about the same time, wrote a letter also. I have an extract here from Mr. Underwood's letter which I will read, and if my recollection is right, it is about the same in substance with the letter of my colleague. I must say, however, that my recollection of my colleague's letter is very general and indistinct. I regret I have not been able to obtain a copy of it Mr. Underwood says:

"In reference to Kentucky, Mr. Lincoln told me he hoped Kentucky would stand by the Government in the present difficulties; but if she would not, that, let her stand still and take no hostile part against it, and that no hostile step should tread her soil. This is also true with Missouri."

My recollection of my colleague's letter is that Mr. Lincoln would acquiesce in Kentucky's neutrality. I may be mistaken in that, however, as I have no very distinct recollection of it. I read it hastily when it appeared in the newspapers, I think some time in May last.

Now, Senators, having disposed of the subject of the neutrality of Kentucky, with your permission I shall address myself briefly to the specific charges contained in the pending resolution against me. I think my colleague himself, as one of my judges, ought now to be satisfied that I have not misrepresented the will of the people of Kentucky. The vindictive manner in which he assailed me I suppose resulted from his character as prosecutor; but I have a right to appeal to his calm and dispassionate reason in his capacity as judge to know if I have not shown, by the most incontrovertible documentary testimony, that I did act in accordance with the will of the people of Kentucky, as made known to me in every form. If he would divest himself of his prejudice, I might yet have some hope of obtaining his vote against this resolution; but I do not think I shall; his prejudices are too deeply rooted to be overthrown by any array of facts, however convincing and irresistible they might be to an unbiased or unprejudiced mind

Let me notice for a moment the resolutions of the conventions that were alluded to by my colleague yesterday. I shall very briefly notice those resolutions, for I have now spoken longer than I

intended to do. The resolutions of the meeting in the county of Henderson contained one clause, approving the proclamation of the Governor, and that was criticised by my colleague. The Governor of Kentucky was only faithfully carrying out the neutrality of the State assumed by the Legislature. My colleague also read a portion of the proclamation of the Governor. I will read the first part of that proclamation to show what the Governor's meaning was:

"Whereas numerous applications have been made to me from many good citizens of this Commonwealth, praying me to issue a proclamation forbidding the march of any forces of this or any other State or States over our soil to make an apprehended attack upon the Federal forces at Cairo, in Illinois, or to disturb any otherwise the peaceful attitude of Kentucky with reference to the deplorable war now waging between the United States and the confederate States; and whereas numerous applications from like good citizens of this Commonwealth have also been made to me, praying me to issue a proclamation forbidding the occupation of any post or place or the march over our sacred soil by any force of the United States for any purpose; and whereas it is made fully evident, by every indication of public sentiment, that it is the determined purpose of the good people of Kentucky to maintain, with courageous firmness, the fixed position of self-defense, proposing or intending no invasion or aggression towards any other State or States, forbidding the quartering of troops upon her soil by either of the hostile sections, but simply standing aloof from an unnatural, horrid, and lamentable strife, for the existence of which Kentucky, neither by thought, word, nor act, is in any wise responsible; and whereas the policy thus recommended by so many of my fellow-citizens of all political leanings is, in my judgment, wise, peaceful, safe, and honorable, and the most likely to preserve peace and amity between the neighboring bordering States on both shores of the Ohio river, and protect Kentucky generally from the ravages of a deplorable war; and whereas the arms distributed to the 'State guard,' composed as it is of gentlemen equally conscientious and honest, who entertain the opinions of both parties, are not to be used *against the Federal Government nor the confederate States*, but to resist and prevent encroachments upon her soil, her rights, her honor, and her sovereignty, by either of the belligerent parties, and to preserve the peace, safety, prosperity, and happiness and strict neutrality of her people, in the hope she may soon have an opportunity to become a successful mediator between them, and in order to remove the unfounded distrust and suspicions of purposes to force Kentucky out of the Union, at the point of the bayonet, which may have been strongly and wickedly engendered in the public mind in regard to my own position and that of the 'State guard.'"

That shows that the Governor had but one purpose in issuing the proclamation—that was to preserve the neutrality of the State. One reason that caused him to issue it was to prevent the marching of troops across Kentucky to attack the Federal troops in Cairo, Illinois. The Governor states that in the proclamation. He speaks particularly of that. Then he forbids troops being marched through Kentucky by either contending party, and asserts the neutrality of the State—a doctrine that had been proclaimed by the Legislature and by all the mass meetings of the Union men, as well as southern rights men, throughout the Commonwealth. The Governor's proclamation is dated May 20, 1861.

My colleague states that one of the objects of the convention at Frankfort, on the 10th of September, was to intimidate the Legislature. Allow me to say to my colleague that the Legislature was composed of many gentlemen of eminent ability—men who could not be intimidated—and I will venture the assertion that not a delegate to that convention ever thought so poorly of the Legislature as to believe they could be intimidated. The members of the convention had too much respect for the intelligence and manhood of the Legislature to harbor such a thought for a moment. I regard the charge of intimidation as unjust, both to the convention and to the Legislature.

My colleague stated yesterday to the Senate that eight or nine months ago a majority of the people of Kentucky, if the question had been submitted to them, would have gone South. How does he reconcile that statement with the assertion that I misrepresented the people by entertaining sentiments that were too strongly southern, in the session of Congress that commenced on the 4th of July last—more than eight months since? The larger number—nearly all—of the votes given and speeches made about which he complains, were made before the 20th of July last, the date of the battle of Bull Run.

There was one resolution passed in the Henderson meeting that my colleague did not put in his indictment, for he carefully culled them. He only used those that he thought would induce the Senate to vote with him. That resolution is this:

"That all honorable efforts for the conciliation of the belligerent sections and the reconstruction of the Union are desirable, and we will heartily second and further such efforts."

There we distinctly declared that we would do everything we could to reconstruct the Union. We thought it could best be done by peace, and hence we declared it. We were opposed to coercion, and we so distinctly stated. I will say here in relation to that meeting that I was merely called to preside over it. It was called to nominate a candidate for the Legislature. Resolutions were passed with very great rapidity, and without much notice from me. I have always been for the reconstruction of the Union and for peace, and opposed to coercion.

Then there was another resolution which my colleague cited, and which I will now read:

"That the recall of the invading armies and the recognition of the confederate States is the true policy to restore peace and preserve the relations of fraternal love and amity between the States."

That resolution does not contemplate a permanent dissolution of the Union, as its very terms show. It says, "in order to restore peace and preserve the relations of fraternal love and amity between the States," they advocate the withdrawing of the troops. Then there was another resolution, which I read a moment since, declaring that we would do everything we could to reconstruct the Union; that we would use every effort for that purpose. But the whole intent and meaning of that resolution was, that rather than attempt to reconstruct by coercion, which was thought could not be done, but if persisted in, would result in disunion and eternal severance of the States of the Union, it would be better to withdraw the troops; in other words, that you should make every honorable effort to reconstruct the Union by peaceable adjustment and compromise; and if you failed, then, rather than have a long, exhausting civil war, acknowledge the independence of the confederate States, and make as close a treaty of amity and commerce as possible with them, and

perhaps in a short time both sections would find by experience they could live more prosperously united, and the Union would again be reconstructed with such constitutional guarantees as would satisfy both the North and the South. That is an idea I have heard advanced by many men of ability and experience; that was the whole idea of that resolution. The resolution speaks of restoring the relations of fraternal love. What fraternal love could there be, if we were parted eternally in separate and independent States? The resolution manifestly contemplated a reconstruction of the Union; the terms of the resolution clearly indicate that. My colleague, however, when he offered his resolution on the 8th of January, to establish a union of such States as would adopt the Crittenden compromise, never talked about reconstruction, and he certainly ought not to object to this resolution. I have given you my interpretation of that resolution. I must confess I thought but little about it at the time; but the whole idea and intention of it was peace and a reconstruction of the Union.

One word, sir, as to the resolutions adopted at the meeting at Frankfort. I have shown that in the meeting at Henderson we declared our purpose to use every effort for the reconstruction of the Union, and declared for neutrality in just such terms as all parties in Kentucky declared for it. Among the Frankfort resolutions I find the following:

"*Resolved*, That every material interest of Kentucky, as well as the highest dictates of patriotism, demand that peace should be maintained within her borders, and this convention solemnly pledges the honor of its members to do all in their power to promote this end."

The object of that convention, as expressly declared in their resolutions, was to maintain peace within the borders of the State. Then they go on in the next resolution and declare that they believe a large majority of the people of Kentucky are in favor of the neutrality of Kentucky. Then follows a resolution, upon which I shall comment briefly, as it seems to be offensive to some persons:

"That the organization and presence upon the territory of Kentucky of a military force of either of the belligerents is a violation of the neutrality indorsed by the people, and we believe can be attended with none other than the most fatal and disastrous results; and in that belief we earnestly advise the removal, by the proper authorities, of all such force from the limits of the State."

Now, what is that? The resolution but declares that the neutrality of Kentucky should be enforced by the proper authorities. Who are the proper authorities? The Legislature and the Governor of the State. It never was intended to mean anything else but that.

But my colleague takes exception to a resolution that was offered by me appointing certain gentlemen a central committee. That resolution was in these words:

"*Resolved*, That Colonel William Preston, George W. Johnson, Esq., General Lucius Desha, Captain Richard Hawes, and Thomas P. Porter, Esq., be, and they are hereby, appointed a committee of organization, in order to carry out the purposes of this convention; and full powers are conferred upon them for that object."

My colleague tries to construe that into a military organization. Why, sir, I never dreamed of a military organization when I introduced that resolution. That convention was organized for the purpose of keeping the peace; it was a political organization; and that resolution was designed merely to organize the ordinary central committee to call meetings, &c. The object of the meeting was to preserve the peace, and the resolution expressly declared that if the State should be invaded and it should be necessary to drive out the invaders, it should be done by the legal authorities, that is, by the State authorities in obedience to the act of the Legislature. I venture to say that there never was a mass political meeting, the object of which was the organization of a political party, but adopted some such resolution forming a central committee for the purpose of general organization; and yet my colleague is trying to torture that resolution into a design to create a military organization. There never was any such intention. Whatever any one of the members of that committee may have done individually afterwards, certainly it was never contemplated by me that they should exercise any power under that resolution other than that usually exercised by committees of political parties in the various States.

When was the neutrality of Kentucky annulled by the State? On the 10th of September last that convention was in session. After that time the Kentucky Legislature invited in troops. They invited General Anderson, and they overthrew their neutrality; but up to the 10th of September, and for several days afterwards, the doctrine of neutrality stood unrepealed on the statute-books in the resolves of the Kentucky Legislature. I stood fairly on them up to that time. A few days after that meeting, the Legislature of Kentucky got off neutrality. What did I do? Did I ever advocate it afterwards? No, sir. I stood where the State stood, and when the Legislature went against it I acquiesced.

But my colleague says many of those men who were with me in that convention have gone South. That is true; and one of those who were with him on the committee on resolutions at Louisville has gone South, and is a member of the confederate congress. I know that many of those gentlemen have gone South; but I am not responsible for that. After the Legislature got off its neutrality, there was organized in Kentucky a provisional government at Russelville. I had nothing to do with that government. I never acknowledged it. I adhered to the old State organization, and am here to represent it. Those who did not adhere to the old organization followed that provisional government and acknowledged it. I did not. My colleague twits me with Breckinridge and other of my friends having gone South. They went South, and they acknowledged the provisional government. I did not. I remained here true to the Constitution, and loyal to what I conceived to be the proper legitimate government of Kentucky; and I intend to remain loyal to it, notwithstanding the assaults of my colleague. I intend to abide the action of the majority of the people of Kentucky properly and legitimately expressed.

But my colleague wishes to oust me from the Senate because I was opposed to coercion, and he quotes a speech that I made on the 2d of March, 1861. That is no new doctrine with me. It is

possible that I may have erred in it; but if I did, I honestly erred. I hope the Senate will pardon me for being so tedious, for this is a matter of deep moment to me, although it may be of little interest to others. I hold in my hand a speech that I made in the Senate on the 22d of January, 1861, and I will read presently some portions of it to the Senate. That speech was made on the Crittenden compromise; and in it I expressed as strongly as I could my attachment to the constitutional Union. I had no stronger language in which to express my attachment to it. I did the same thing in the speech I made when I introduced the resolution to raise a committee of thirteen. I defy my colleague, or my most inveterate enemy, to find in any speech of mine any sentence in which I ever uttered a sentiment of disloyalty to the constitutional Union of our fathers. I have every desire that this constitutional Union shall be maintained, and I have said it on all occasions. I now desire it to be reconstructed. I have declared it in every speech that I ever made on the subject in the Senate or elsewhere. I may have been wrong in the means that I resorted to to save it. I differed and now differ with Senators as to the best means by which it should be saved. They may have been right, and I wrong; but I was honest in those opinions. I desired the constitutional Union to be saved as a whole; and I would be willing to yield my life to-day if I could preserve the constitutional Union of our fathers, and transmit it unimpaired to those who are to come after us.

In my speech in support of the proposition to raise a committee of thirteen, after speaking of the proposed amendments to the Constitution, I said:

"Let us follow the worthy example of the noble patriots who have gone before us. When the country was imperiled and surrounded by dangers that threatened its ruin they never thought of a disruption of the Government as a remedy. They went to work like sensible and patriotic men to remedy the evils by providing additional securities —by perfecting the Government; first, by the Articles of Confederation; then by the adoption of the present Constitution; and at three different times amending it in such manner as to meet the exigencies of the times, and give more ample security to the people in their persons, property, and religion, and curing such defects as experience had pointed out. That is our duty to-day. Let us never despair of the Republic; but go to work promptly, and so amend the Constitution as to give prompt, certain, and full guarantees to the rights of every citizen in every State and Territory of the Union. Unless we proceed to this work without delay, and exhaust every effort to accomplish it, we will not have discharged the duty we owe to ourselves, our country, and those who are to come after us. Let us employ constitutional remedies for the correction of the evils by which we are environed, and to avert the dangers that threaten to ingulf us in inevitable ruin. Unless we exhaust every means within our reach to preserve and protect the Constitution, and save our common country, we will be degenerate sons of the noblest sires the world ever saw."

That speech I made on the 10th of December, 1860. In my speech on the Crittenden compromise in January, 1861, I discussed this very doctrine of coercion. I will read one or two extracts from it to show that that doctrine, whether right or wrong, is no new thing with me:

"I do not believe that under the Constitution of the United States we have any right to make war upon a State. We find, by reference to the proceedings of the convention that framed the Constitution, that it was proposed to give that power, and it was denied.

"In the debates on the Federal Constitution, (Madison Papers, vol. 5, p. 139):

"'The last clause of the sixth resolution, "authorizing an exertion of the force of the whole against a delinquent State," came next in consideration.

"'Mr. Madison observed that the more he reflected on the use of force, the more he doubted the practicability, the justice, and the efficacy of it, when applied to people collectively, and not individually. A union of the States containing such an ingredient seemed to provide for its own destruction. The use of force against a State would look more like a declaration of war than an infliction of punishment, and would probably be considered by the party attacked as a dissolution of all previous compacts by which it might be bound. He hoped that such a system would be framed as might render this resource unnecessary, and moved that the clause be postponed. This motion was agreed to, *nem. con.*'

"Mr. Ellsworth, upon the same subject, said:

"'I am for coercion by law—that coercion which acts only upon delinquent individuals. This Constitution does not attempt to coerce sovereign bodies—States—in their political capacity. No coercion is applicable to such bodies but that of an armed force. If we should attempt to execute the laws of the Union by sending an armed force against a delinquent State, it would involve the good and bad, the innocent and guilty, in the same calamity.'—*Elliot's Debates*, vol. 2, p. 197.

"Alexander Hamilton said:

"'It has been observed, to coerce the States is one of the maddest projects that was ever devised. A failure of compliance will never be confined to a single State. This being the case, can we suppose it wise to hazard a civil war? Suppose Massachusetts, or any large State, should refuse, and Congress should attempt to compel them, would they not have influence to procure assistance, especially from those States which are in the same situation as themselves? What picture does this idea present to our view? A complying State at war with a non-complying State; Congress marching the troops of one State into the bosom of another; this State collecting auxiliaries, and forming, perhaps, a majority against its Federal head. Here is a nation at war with itself. Can any reasonable man be well disposed toward a government which makes war and carnage the only means of supporting itself—a government that can exist only by the sword? Every such war must involve the innocent with the guilty. This single consideration should be sufficient to dispose every peaceable citizen against such a government.'—*Elliot's Debates*, vol. 2, p. 233.

"Mr. Mason, and other distinguished gentlemen in that convention, uttered similar views. General Jackson has been quoted as authority by those who advocate coercion. In his farewell address he said:

"'The Constitution cannot be maintained, nor the Union preserved, in opposition to public feeling, by the mere exertion of the coercive power confided in the central Government. The foundations must be laid in the affections of the people, in the security it gives to life, liberty, character, and property in every quarter of the country.'

"This Government, if preserved, must be maintained upon the principle clearly and distinctly enunciated by General Jackson in the clause of his farewell address which I have just read. It is a Union that depends upon the consent of the people governed. It can only be held together by a faithful observance by all the States of the requirements of the Constitution, mutual interest and forbearance, and the ties of fraternity.

"You speak, Senators, of executing the laws. I am as much in favor of executing the laws as any Senator in this Chamber. The laws ought to be honestly and faithfully executed. Laws can be executed against individuals, but not against sovereign States. How is it possible that you can execute the laws when you have no civil officer in the seceding States? You can only constitutionally and lawfully apply force in aid of the civil authority. You have no judges, you have no marshals, you have no civil officers in those States. Is there a citizen of one of the seceding States who acknowledges the jurisdiction of the United States? I doubt if there be one.

"How, then, can you execute the laws there? If you resort to force, without that force being called in aid of the civil authority, it would be war. War, of itself, is equivalent to dissolution. Suppose twenty-eight States were to undertake by force to compel the five seceding States to remain in the Union and to acknowledge and submit to the jurisdiction of the United States, what would be the result?

When you had accomplished everything you could expect from the Army and Navy—bombarded and destroyed their cities, laid waste their fields, slaughtered their people, overrun and conquered them—would you, by that means, have preserved the Union? No; you would have placed it beyond the probability of reconstruction. So far from a constitutional Union of thirty-three free sovereign States, you would have twenty-eight States and five conquered provinces. It is madness, worse than madness, to think of preserving this Union by force. It cannot be done."

I said further:

"If you would resort to coercion and war, what will be the result? You would have a long, exhausting civil war, and after it you would settle all your difficulties by negotiation. If we have to separate, in God's name let us part in peace. I trust, however, that all our difficulties may be properly and honorably adjusted, and that this Union may last for hundreds of years to come."

I said "if we have to separate, in God's name let us part in peace." Senators may think with my colleague, that that is very strange language. Why, sir, I hold in my hand an extract from a letter of Hon. Edward Everett, of Boston, in which he used this language:

"To expect to hold fifteen States in the Union by force is preposterous. The idea of a civil war, accompanied as it would be by servile insurrection, is too monstrous to be entertained for a moment. If our sister States must leave us, in the name of Heaven let them go in peace."—*Edward Everett's Letter to the Boston Courier, February* 22, 1861.

I suppose Mr. Everett will not be denounced as disloyal for those sentiments. Those were my sentiments.

Stephen A. Douglas, in a speech in the Senate, remarked as follows upon coercion and civil war:

"I do not understand how a man can claim to be a friend of the Union, and yet be in favor of war upon ten millions of people in the Union. You cannot cover it up much longer under the pretext of love for the Union.

"War is disunion; war is a final and eternal separation; and the man who is for prosecuting this war, though he may have Union in his heart, is a disunionist."

John Quincy Adams, in 1838, in speaking of the right of revolution, said:

"With these qualifications we may admit the same right as vested in the people of every State in the Union, with reference to the General Government, which was exercised by the people of the United Colonies with reference to the supreme head of the British empire, of which they formed a part; and under these limitations have the people of each State in the Union a right to secede from the confederated Union itself. Thus stands the right. But the indissoluble link of union between the people of the several States of this confederated nation is, after all, not in the right, but in the heart. If the day should ever come (may Heaven avert it) when the affections of the people of these States shall be alienated from each other; when the fraternal shall give way to cold indifference or collision of interest, shall fester into hatred, the bonds of political association will not long hold together parties no longer attracted by the magnetism of conciliated interests and kindly sympathies; and far better will it be for the people of these disunited States to part in friendship from each other than to be held together by constraint. Then will be the time for reverting to the precedents which occurred at the formation and adoption of the Constitution, to form again a more perfect Union by dissolving that which could no longer bind, and to leave the separated parts to be united by the law of political gravitation to the center."

Mr. Adams states distinctly, in the extract just read, that it would be far better for the people of disunited States to part in friendship from each other than to be held together by coercion.

At the close of my speech just quoted, on the Crittenden compromise, I stated my attitude towards Kentucky as follows:

"I have been often asked what Kentucky will do in the event of a refusal on the part of the North to yield the guarantees she asks. Allow me to say that I am not authorized to speak for Kentucky. She has convened her Legislature in extraordinary session, to consider the condition of the country. In a very short time her chosen representatives will make known her position. I have every confidence that she will meet this crisis, and that she will act in the midst of the great events by which she is surrounded, in a manner becoming the honor and the dignity of a brave people, and the people of a free sovereign State, who know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain them. When the position of Kentucky shall be thus taken, when her sovereign will shall be legitimately made known, whether it be according to my personal judgment or not, I, as a true and loyal son, will obey her high behests."

Kentucky did make known her will, and I, to the best of my poor ability, obeyed it, as I have shown; and for that my colleague desires to visit upon me the harsh censure of expulsion. In the speech that I delivered here at the executive session I declared that I was for maintaining the constitutional Union. I have been true and loyal to the Constitution. I have resisted and denounced every infraction of that glorious instrument; yet my colleague says I have violated it; he has not pointed to a single instance in which I have not observed it.

My colleague arraigns me for voting against all war supplies, and things of that sort. He might have saved himself that trouble. It was known to the whole Senate. What I did I have not done in a corner; it was here in the Senate Chamber, and I admit it. I acted conscientiously. I believed I was right, and have no regrets in telling my colleague that I did what I believed was right. I may have been in error; but I have never regretted my action when I believed that action was right, and the duty was conscientiously performed. He read extracts from my speech denouncing the President for usurpation. I did, sir, in my place in the Senate censure the President for suspending the writ of *habeas corpus*, and adding to the regular Army and Navy without the authority of Congress, and causing arrests to be made without warrant. I then believed and now believe that I was right in doing so; but even in that speech which perhaps has called upon me most of this censure, I said:

"I still declare, to-day, that I desire these difficulties to be settled in any other way than by a recourse to arms. I do not believe this Union will ever be reinstated, or that it will ever be held together by force of arms. I believe that those who really love the Union, those who wish to restore the Union of these States, those who wish to bring them back in harmony under the Constitution of the country, desire to avert war. I said in my place last winter that I believed war was equivalent to disunion. I solemnly believe to-day that every battle you fight will widen and deepen the chasm that divides the States of this Union. In my judgment, Senators, you can never reunite this distracted, broken Confederacy by force of arms. I do not believe that one section can ever conquer the other; but if it could, so far from that bringing about the result for which you go to war, you would have produced the very opposite; you would have forever destroyed the constitutional Union.

"Senators, in my judgment, we should make every effort to settle this matter peaceably. I would like to see this war instantly cease on both sides, and then see the States that are now arrayed in hostile attitude against each other, exhaust every means possible for the peaceful settlement of the difficulties by such amendments to the Constitution as would satisfy all parties, and allow us to live in peace and harmony once more as a united people. I desire to see this

Union reunited, and this constitutional Confederacy go on as a whole, as much as any man in this Chamber. But I feel confident that you can never effect that by arms. You must do it by compromise; you must do it by conciliation. You cannot do it by force. I heartily concurred with the Senator from Illinois, (now, I regret, no more,) the late Mr. Douglas, in the speech which he made here on the 15th of March last. It so fully meets my views on this question of coercion, that I will send it forward, and ask the Clerk to read it.

"The Clerk read, as follows:

"'I prefer such an amicable settlement to peaceable dissolution; and I prefer it a thousand times to civil war. If we can adopt such amendments as will be satisfactory to Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and the other border States, the plan of pacification which will satisfy them will create a Union party in the cotton States which will soon embrace a large majority of the people in those States, and bring them back of their own free will and accord; and thus restore, strengthen, and perpetuate this glorious old Union forever. I repeat, whatever guarantees will satisfy Maryland and the border States (the States now in the Union) will create a Union party in the seceded States that will bring them back by the voluntary action of their own people. You can restore and preserve the Government in that mode. You can do it in no other.

"'War is disunion. War is final, eternal separation. Hence, disguise it as you may, every Union man in America must advocate such amendments to the Constitution as will preserve peace and restore the Union; while every disunionist, whether openly or secretly plotting its destruction, is the advocate of peaceful secession, or of war, as the surest means of rendering reunion and reconstruction impossible. I have too much respect for his intellect to believe, for one moment, that there is a man for war who is not a disunionist *per se*. Hence I do not mean, if I can prevent it, that the enemies of the Union—men plotting to destroy it—shall drag this country into war, under the pretext of protecting the public property and enforcing the laws and collecting revenue, when their object is disunion, and war the means of accomplishing a cherished purpose.

"'The disunionists, therefore, are divided into two classes: the one open, the other secret disunionists. The one is in favor of peaceful secession and a recognition of independence; the other is in favor of war as the surest means of accomplishing the object, and of making the separation final and eternal. I am a Union man, and hence against war; but if the Union must be temporarily broken by a revolution, and the establishment of a *de facto* government by some of the States, let no act be done that will prevent restoration and future preservation. Peace is the only policy that can lead to that result.

"'But we are told, and we hear it repeated everywhere, that we must find out whether we have got a Government. "Have we a Government?" is the question, and we are told we must test that question by using the military power to put down all discontented spirits. Sir, this question, "have we a Government?" has been propounded by every tyrant who has tried to keep his feet on the necks of the people since the world began. When the barons demanded Magna Charta from King John at Runnymede, he exclaimed, "Have we a Government?" and called for his army to put down the discontented barons. When Charles I attempted to collect the ship money in disregard of the rights of the people, and was resisted by them, he exclaimed, "Have we a Government? We cannot treat with rebels; put down the traitors; we must show that we have a Government." When James II was driven from the throne of England for trampling on the liberties of the people, he called for his army, and exclaimed, "Let us show that we have a Government." When George III called upon his army to put down the rebellion in America, Lord North cried lustily, "No compromise with traitors; let us demonstrate that we have a Government." When, in 1848, the people rose upon their tyrants all over Europe and demanded guarantees for their rights, every crowned head exclaimed, "Have we a Government?" and appealed to the army to vindicate their authority and enforce the law.

"'Sir, the history of the world does not fail to condemn the folly, weakness, and wickedness of that Government which draws its sword upon its own people when they demanded guarantees for their rights. This cry, that we must have a Government, is merely following the example of the besotted Bourbon, who never learned anything by misfortune, never forgave an injury, never forgot an affront. Must we demonstrate that we have got a Government, and coerce obedience without reference to the justice or injustice of the complaint? Sir, whenever ten millions of people proclaim to you, with one unanimous voice, that they apprehend their rights, their firesides, and their family altars are in danger, it becomes a wise Government to listen to the appeal, and to remove the apprehension. History does not record an example where any human government has been strong enough to crush ten millions of people into subjection when they believed their rights and liberties were imperiled without first converting the Government itself into a despotism, and destroying the last vestige of freedom.'

"Mr. Powell. Mr. President, the sentiment expressed in the extract just read from the speech of the illustrious Senator from Illinois, now no more, fully meets my approval. I approved it when it was uttered in this Chamber; I approve it now. I verily believe that those who propose to maintain the Union of these States by arms are disunionists. They may not wish to destroy the Union; but the very means to which they resort for the purpose of saving it, will most assuredly accomplish its destruction. Hence I have been from the beginning opposed to war, and I am now opposed to it. I think that, in this age, as a Christian, enlightened people, we should settle these difficulties without a resort to arms."

I declared in that speech that I was in favor of using every measure to reunite the States. I so stated in every speech that I ever made on the subject. I defy any Senator to point to any speech of mine in which I do not distinctly declare for the constitutional Union. I have differed with Senators as to the best means to bring about that result. Some thought it was best to do it by coercion. I thought it could only be done by concession and compromise. But, sir, I suppose this is the first time in the history of this nation that it was ever attempted to expel a Senator because he held opinions that were not palatable to the majority. Mr. President, I am willing to stand by my congressional record; I do not regret the speeches I have made, or the votes I have given. I acted honestly and conscientiously, with the single view and intention of promoting the best interest of my country, and saving the country from war, desolation, and ruin. I am willing that impartial history shall pass upon it. I will abide the verdict.

Mr. President, if my colleague would govern his vote by the principle he himself announced the other day, I should feel very sure that it would be in my favor. In speaking of Mr. Stark's case, he said:

"Mr. President, we had a case involving this principle before the Senate a few weeks ago; and in the discussion and adjudgment of that case the principle seemed to be generally conceded that an abstract opinion, however disloyal it might be, unaccompanied by an overt act, was not sufficient to expel a member from the Senate. That was my own proposition, and my own principle, and I now adhere to it; I maintain it against all odds."

Well, sir, all the charges brought against me are but abstract opinions; and in truth there is but little in the resolutions that have been quoted against me, but what I have uttered here in my place in the Senate; for the whole scope and verge of them was to maintain the neutrality of Kentucky, and to reunite the States by peaceable means. In this long list of charges brought against me by my colleague charging disloyalty he does not point to overt acts. He says my purposes, if not my acts, are disloyal. I had supposed that there was no man who could look into the purposes of his brother, and summon him to trial and condemn him for what he proposed to do. I thought it was left to the omnipotent God alone to look into the hearts of men, and to find out their

purposes. I believe if the great Jehovah wished to make a vicegerent upon earth, and endow him with power to look into the consciences and motives of men he would select a more amiable person than my colleague, one who was not so hasty to judge or quick to condemn; for my colleague is as intense a gentleman as I know of. He is very intense, very excitable, unrelenting, bitter, and unforgiving. I have always accorded to him honesty with his intensity; I do it now; but I do not believe that the great Jehovah would make a vicegerent out of one who is so ill-natured, petulant, and so unforgiving as my colleague sometimes is. I think he would select a more benevolent, a more amiable, and a more forgiving person. I protest against my colleague sitting in judgment upon my motives. He is so filled with animosity, spite, and spleen, that he is incapable of doing me justice.

Senators, so far as the charges, innuendoes, and deductions in this accusation, drawn up by my colleague, about my loyalty are concerned, I deny that there is any truth in any of them. They are utterly unfounded; they do not exist in fact, but only in my colleague's, I regret to say, prejudiced brain. I have not been disloyal to this Government, and I do not intend to be. I have always desired, and I now desire, the constitutional Union of our fathers restored. I desire to see all the stars blaze on our flag forever, each representing a free sovereign State, in the full enjoyment of every constitutional right, and my youthful fancy was that this might be a sea-girt Republic, and that the stars and stripes might wave over the whole continent and all the islands thereunto adjacent.

Senators know how zealously I labored to settle this matter in the beginning. I counseled with those who left us. I told them that they should stay and fight the battle here. I believed, and honestly believed, that coercion was not the way to bring them back. Others differed with me. They may be right; I may be wrong. Time alone will determine that. I shall not discuss it. But I have looked somewhat into the history of the world, and I have seen no instance of confederate States that have been held together by coercion. I read in ancient history that the Amphictyonic league, the wisest, perhaps, of Grecian confederacies, was destroyed by an appeal to this doctrine of coercion. The majority of the States undertook to coerce one of the States—the Phocians. They called in Philip of Macedon, too ready to avenge their quarrels. What was the result? That celebrated league was destroyed; Philip came and possessed himself of a large portion of the territories of the Grecian States. In after time, in the history of that justly celebrated people, the Achæan league existed. Coercion was attempted on a delinquent State; the Romans were called in; and that league was overthrown, and the last hope of Grecian liberty perished.

Philip II, of Spain, instead of yielding to the just demands of the people of the Netherlands, undertook coercion, and after a war of over thirty years, the Low Countries were wrested from his dominions by the determined and heroic valor of William the Silent and his successors and their brave followers.

Great Britain turned a deaf ear to the just demands of our fathers, undertook to coerce them, and lost forever the richest of her colonies. These pertinent, and to me instructive, examples, confirm me in the opinion that our wisest and best policy was compromise and conciliation, not coercion and war.

I believed that we could do more by compromise and conciliation than by coercion. That was my belief from the beginning. I counseled that. My advice was not taken. Other gentlemen quite as patriotic, and I dare say—indeed I know—much wiser than I, thought differently. I have to submit to their judgment. I am but one. My counsels were not followed; my advice not taken. If they had been, I am confident we should have settled this matter by peaceful means, by adopting amendments to the Constitution that would have satisfied the cotton States, the entire South, and thus have saved the Union, and averted this bloody and expensive civil war which so sorely devastates our once prosperous, free, and happy country.

But I am astonished that my colleague, after laying down the very correct principle he did in Mr. STARK's case, should think that I should be expelled because I was opposed to coercion and war. Why, sir, I remember that Lord Chatham and Mr. Burke thundered in the ears of the British Parliament opposition to the war against our fathers. Lord Chatham introduced resolutions into the British Parliament, and discussed them with great eloquence, great force, and great ability, demanding the recall of the troops from Boston; and yet they have been decreed by the judgment of mankind patriots and wise statesmen. The lamented Douglas made a most able and eloquent speech against coercion in this Chamber in March last, extracts from which I have read to the Senate. I have also read extracts from the speeches of the most illustrious of our fathers—statesmen eminent for their ability and patriotism—who opposed this doctrine of coercion. In opposing coercion, I have but followed the teachings of our wisest statesmen.

Mr. President, this country has been engaged in wars before this. The war of 1812 was going on when I was an infant. I discover, in looking into the congressional proceedings of that time, that there were many members who voted against supplies of men and money. Even last night, after my colleague so fiercely arraigned me, I took up the proceedings of Congress and I noticed that an act to provide additional military force in the year 1813, was opposed most vehemently by Mr. Josiah Quincy, of Massachusetts, and others. They thought the force was going to be used to invade Canada. I did not read the debate at large, but I read enough to show that that was the leading idea upon which they based their opposition. They opposed the increase of the Army, and the vote on the passage of the bill stood—yeas 77, nays 42. Would it have been just if those gentlemen honestly entertained the sentiments they expressed, to have expelled them from the House on the ground that they were not loyal to the country?

In the war with Mexico there were men who voted against supplies for our Army, and my col-

league, who was a member of the other House at that time, declared in a speech, which I noticed last night in the Globe, that he intended to vote men and money, and yet he denounced the President as a usurper for bringing on the war; and I find that my colleague voted against the Treasury note and loan bill at that day. I saw among the names of those who voted against it a Mr. Foot. I believe it is the honorable Senator who so worthily represents the State of Vermont in this Hall. The honorable Senator from New York [Mr. King] was also among the nays. The vote on that bill was, yeas 119, nays 47. It was a proposition to borrow $10,000,000, and issue Treasury notes. There are now three gentlemen in this House who voted against that bill. I certainly would not think of arraigning those honorable gentlemen for that vote. I have no doubt they acted conscientiously—did what they thought was right—and perhaps their vote was right. I am not sitting in judgment upon it; but I merely note these things to show you that honorable and patriotic gentlemen might give a vote even against war supplies without being justly obnoxious to the charge of disloyalty.

Then there were some gentlemen who voted against a bill supplementary to an act providing for the prosecution of the war, about the troops, &c. This bill was of no great importance. My colleague and those other gentlemen named voted against that bill, and so did many members of the Whig party at that day. I do not know the vote on the main bill. I merely mention these things, not to censure, but to show to the Senate that honorable gentlemen, patriotic gentlemen, gentlemen who love their country, may speak, and vote even, against men and money without being censured and driven from their places on the ground of disloyalty.

Senators, after listening attentively, as I did, to the speech of my colleague, his whole ground is that I have not voted to carry out these war measures. In my action in this body, I have on all occasions spoken and voted in such manner as I thought was right; and while I retain a seat here I will continue to do so; I will utter my honest sentiments. I will vote for or against measures as I may think them right or wrong. That it is my duty to do, and I should be an unworthy representative of a free people unless I did so. While I do that, I am not prepared, and do not intend, to impeach the loyalty of others because they differ from me. If it comes to that, that a Senator cannot speak and vote as he thinks proper and right with out expulsion, then the majority are masters and the minority are slaves, and a seat in the American Senate would no longer be desired by an honest man or a patriot. I never have given a vote, I never have made a speech, I never have uttered a sentiment, I never have advocated a principle that I did not believe was calculated to promote the public good, to preserve the constitutional Union, and to reconstruct the broken Confederacy. That has been my object, nothing else. I may have been wrong in many of the principles I have advocated; I have, at least, been sincere, honest, and patriotic.

Senators, I am obliged to you for your attention. I submit this case to your impartial judgments, and I feel that you will decide it in a manner becoming your high character. After the report of the committee I should not have said a word but for the extraordinary speech of my colleague. I was driven to reply to that speech. The committee, consisting of gentlemen opposed to me politically with one exception, five of them Republicans, after a full investigation made a report adverse to the resolution; and I certainly should have rested the case on that report without saying one word to the Senate; and if my colleague had confined himself strictly to the record, I did not propose to open my mouth. I again thank you for the indulgent and patient attention with which you have listened to me.

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## APPENDIX.

### *Resolutions adopted by the Union State Convention held in Louisville on the 8th of January*, 1861.

The following resolutions were reported to the Union Democratic State convention by a committee composed of the following gentlemen, to wit: Governor Dixon, W. G. Thompson, Judge Barkee, J. P. Barbour, Alexander Lusk, J. F. Bullitt, John Jackson, V. B. Young, T. L. Jones; and to the Union State convention by the following committee, to wit: Hon. Garrett Davis, Hon. Joshua F. Bell, J. L. Shackelford, W. L. Underwood, John W. Crocket, Z. Wheat, Thomas W. Riley, W. C. Goodloe, P. B. Muir, J. B. Huston, Orlando Brown, James Taylor, were unanimously adopted by both meetings:

"*Resolved*, That the people of Kentucky place the highest estimate on the Union of these States, on terms fair and just to all of its members; it is a Union made and commended to us by our patriotic ancestors, as a priceless legacy to be preserved by their children; that it will not cost a tithe of the patriotism and forbearance to save it that it did our fathers to make it; that it affords us a better government for peace and liberty at home and defense against aggression from abroad than is likely to be made out of its parts.

"*Resolved*, That although we of the slave States, and especially of Kentucky, have great reason to complain of bad fellowship and wrongs done us both in character and property by some of the citizens of the free States, and the States themselves, who have broken faith with us and gone astray from the landmarks of our fathers, yet we are ardently attached to our national Union; and, trusting that they will yet give us that justice we demand, and without which we cannot be friends, we still proclaim ourselves in favor of the Union, and so long as there is hope of preserving it on the basis of the Constitution, we will maintain and defend it.

"*Resolved*, That all laws of the free States which nullify and impair the full and fair operation of the fugitive slave law are in conflict with the national Constitution, and we demand their repeal at the earliest practicable moment.

"*Resolved*, That we consider the election of a President by one section of the Union on the ground of opposition to the institutions of the other as a severe test of the patriotism and forbearance of the minority; but that notwithstanding this ill-advised experiment on the harmony of the Union, we do not regard the election of Abraham Lincoln as a cause for its dissolution.

"*Resolved*, That we have in the majority of both Houses of the next Congress a sufficient security against any designs of aggression upon the rights of the South, and that it is the duty of the southern States to avail themselves of this fact in the operation of our institutions, and not desert the Union at this crisis, when we have a victory instead of a defeat in the main departments of the Federal Government, especially as those departments are sustained by a large majority of the popular vote of the United States.

"*Resolved*, That if this anti-slavery party should increase in strength, and be able to carry out its purposes in the use

of the Federal Government, the South has ample means of resistance, and is fully able, at any time, to resist unconstitutional aggressions; and we have, therefore, no need to adopt hastily this last resort.

"*Resolved*, That the claim set up by a majority of the free States to all the territory, and the assumption of the right to restrict the South from the occupancy of any of the common Territories with their institutions, is unjust and unconstitutional, and will not be submitted to by a free people jealous of their rights.

"*Resolved*, That we hereby recommend the adoption of the proposition of our distinguished Senator, John J. Crittenden, as a fair and honorable adjustment of the difficulties which divide and distract the people of our beloved country, which are as follows:

"Joint resolution proposing certain amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

"Whereas serious and alarming dissensions have arisen between the northern and southern States concerning the rights of the slaveholding States, and especially their rights in the common territory of the United States; and whereas it is eminently desirable and proper that those dissensions which now threaten the very existence of this Union should be permanently quieted and settled by constitutional provisions which shall do equal justice to all sections, and thereby restore to the people that peace and good will which ought to prevail between all the citizens of the United States: Therefore,

"*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled*, (two thirds of both Houses concurring,) That the following articles be, and are hereby, proposed and submitted as amendments to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of said Constitution when ratified by conventions of three fourths of the several States.

"Art. 1. In all the territory of the United States now held, or hereafter acquired, situated north of latitude 36° 30′, slavery, or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, is prohibited while such territory shall remain under territorial government. In all the territory south of said line of latitude slavery of the African race is hereby recognized as existing, and shall not be interfered with by Congress; but shall be protected as property by all the departments of the territorial government during its continuance, and when any territory north or south of said line, within such boundaries as Congress may prescribe, shall contain the population requisite for a member of Congress, according to the then Federal ratio of representation of the people of the United States, it shall, if its form of government be republican, be admitted into this Union on an equal footing with the original States, with or without slavery, as the constitution of such new State may provide.

"Art. 2. Congress shall have no power to abolish slavery in places under its exclusive jurisdiction, and situated within the limits of States that permit the holding of slaves.

"Art. 3. Congress shall have no power to abolish slavery from the District of Columbia so long as it exists in the adjoining States of Virginia and Maryland, or either, nor without the consent of the inhabitants, nor without just compensation first made to such owners of slaves as do not consent to such abolishment. Nor shall Congress at any time prohibit officers of the Federal Government, or members of Congress, whose duties require them to be in said District, from bringing with them their slaves, and holding them as such, during the time their duties may require them to remain there, and afterwards taking them from the District.

"Art. 4. Congress shall have no power to prohibit or hinder the transportation of slaves from one State to another, or to a Territory in which slaves are by law permitted to be held, whether that transportation be by land, navigable rivers, or by the sea.

"Art. 5. That, in addition to the provisions of the third paragraph of the second section of the fourth article of the Constitution of the United States, Congress shall have power to provide by law, and it shall be its duty to so provide, that the United States shall pay to the owner who shall apply for it the full value of his fugitive slave, in all cases, when the marshal or other officer whose duty it was to arrest said fugitive was prevented from so doing by violence or intimidation, or when, after arrest, said fugitive was rescued by force and the owner thereby prevented and obstructed in the pursuit of his remedy for the recovery of his fugitive slave under the said clause of the Constitution and the laws made in pursuance thereof. And in all such cases, when the United States shall pay for such fugitive, they shall have the right, in their own name, to sue the county in which said violence, intimidation, or rescue was committed, and to recover from it, with interest and damages, the amount paid by them for said fugitive slave. And the said county, after it has paid said amount to the United States, may, for its indemnity, sue and recover from the wrong-doers, or rescuers, by whom the owner was prevented from the recovery of his fugitive slave, in like manner as the owner himself might have sued and recovered.

"Art. 6. No future amendment of the Constitution shall affect the five preceding articles, nor the third paragraph of the second section of the first article of the Constitution, nor the third paragraph of the second section of the fourth article of said Constitution, and no amendment shall be made to the Constitution which will authorize or give to Congress any power to abolish or interfere with slavery in any of the States by whose laws it is or may be allowed or permitted.

"*Resolved*, That we tender cordial greeting to our faithful allies of the North who have so long battled for our rights and endeavored to beat back the tide of fanaticism in their midst; we hail them as brethren good and true, and bid them stand firmly by us in the preservation of our General Government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the 'sheet anchor' of our peace at home and our safety abroad.

"*Resolved*, That we cannot regard the Constitution of the United States as a mere compact to be broken at the will of each, but as more and greater than that—the great bond of the people, establishing a more perfect union for themselves and their posterity, only to be dissolved by common consent or revolution.

"*Resolved*, That we recommend to the Legislature of the State to put these amendments in form, and submit them to the other States; and that, if the disorganization of the present Union is not arrested, that the States agreeing to these amendments of the Federal Constitution shall form a separate confederacy, with power to admit new States under our glorious Constitution thus amended.

"*Resolved*, That it is expedient to call a convention of the border free and slave States, and such other States as may see fit to unite with them, to consider the best mode of settlement of the questions which now agitate and threaten to destroy the union of these States.

"*Resolved*, That we deplore the existence of a Union to be held together by the sword, with laws to be enforced by standing armies; it is not such a Union as our fathers intended, and not worth preserving.

"*Resolved*, That if the State of Kentucky be represented in any convention of the States, such representation should be chosen by the people themselves."

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*Proceedings and Resolutions of a Mass Meeting of Five Thousand Union Men, held at Louisville on the 18th of April*, 1861.

"One of the grandest and largest public meetings ever held in Louisville filled the great east hall of the court-house last night, in response to a call for a sober expression as to the proper position for Kentucky to assume in the present crisis. It was a splendid meeting, both as regards numbers and material. It was a closely attentive and understanding assemblage, of the best intelligence of the city, and its effect must be wide and wholesome. If the warring sections will but respect Kentucky's position and her advice, all may yet be well, civil war averted, and peace restored. We were more than gratified with the meeting and its work. The stars and stripes were on both sides of the speaker's stand, and were frequently cheered as allusions to the national banner were made.

"James Speed, Esq., called the meeting to order, and nominated Judge Pirtle as chairman. The nomination was unanimously confirmed.

"Mr. Speed then nominated Messrs. W. E. Glover, C. D. Pennebaker, A. B. Semple, G. W. Houghton, Phil. Tompert, A. D. Hunt, Geo. Ainslie, and James Malona as vice presidents, all of whom were elected by acclamation. Lewis E. Harvie, Esq., was appointed secretary.

"Judge Pirtle briefly addressed the meeting on taking the chair, expressing his thanks for the honor conferred upon him, and upon the importance of the occasion. He urged that reason and reflection should govern the course of Kentucky, and not passion and resentment.

"Hon. Nat. Wolfe moved the appointment of a committee on resolutions, and the following gentlemen were accord-

ingly appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sentiments and sense of the meeting: Nat. Wolfe, Lovel Russean, Joseph Speed, G. A. Houghton, J. H. Harney and Judge Bullock.

"Hon. Nat. Wolfe, from the committee on resolutions, reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were adopted with hardly a dissenting voice:

"Events of commanding importance to the future safety and honor of Kentucky have occurred which call for action on the part of her citizens; and every consideration of self-interest, and every dictate of wisdom and patriotism must prompt our State to maintain most resolutely her position of loyalty. Situated on the border of the slave States, with seven hundred miles of territory exposed to the hostile attack, should the Union be divided into two separate sovereignties, and with but one million of population to oppose the four or five millions of the States contiguous to her, which might become unfriendly, Kentucky owes it to herself to exercise a wise precaution before she precipitates any course of action which may involve her in an internecine war. She has no reason to distrust the present kindly feelings of the people who reside on the north bank of the Ohio river, long her friendly neighbors, and connected by a thousand ties of business and consanguinity, but she must realize the fact that if Kentucky separates from the Federal Union and assumes her sovereign powers as an independent State, that Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, remaining loyal to the Federal Union, must become her political antagonists. If Kentucky deserts the stars and stripes, and those States adhere to the flag of the Union, it seems impossible to imagine a continuance of our old friendly relations when constantly recurring causes of irritation could not be avoided. It is from no fear that Kentucky would not always prove herself equal to the exigencies of any new position she might see proper to assume, and from no distrust of the bravery of her sons that these suggestions are made, but as 'when in the course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to a separation,' so an equal necessity exists that we should not dissolve those bands with old friends and neighbors without calling to our aid every suggestion of prudence, and exhausting every effort to reconcile difficulties, before taking steps which cannot be retraced, and may lead to exasperation, collisions, and eventual war: Therefore,

"*Be it resolved*, That as the confederate States have, by overt acts, commenced war against the United States, without consultation with Kentucky and their sister southern States, Kentucky reserves to herself the right to choose her own position, and that, while her natural sympathies are with those who have a common interest in the protection of slavery, she still acknowledges her loyalty and fealty to the Government of the United States, which she will cheerfully render until that Government becomes aggressive, tyrannical, and regardless of our rights in slave property.

"2. That the national Government should be tried by its acts, and that the several States, as its peers in their appropriate spheres, will hold it to a rigid accountability, and require that its acts should be fraternal, in their efforts to bring back the seceding States, and not sanguinary or coercive.

"3. That as we oppose the call of the President for volunteers for the purpose of coercing the seceding States, so we oppose the raising of troops in this State to cooperate with the southern confederacy, when the acknowledged intention of the latter is to march upon the city of Washington and capture the capital, and when in its march thither it must pass through States which have not yet renounced their allegiance to the Union.

"4. That secession is a remedy for no evils, real or imaginary, but an aggravation and complication of existing difficulties.

"5. That the memories of the past, the interests of the present, and the solemn convictions of future duty and usefulness in the hope of mediation, prevent Kentucky from taking part with the seceding States against the General Government.

"6. That 'the present duty of Kentucky is to maintain her present independent position, taking sides not with the Administration nor with the seceding States, but with the Union against them both, declaring her soil to be sacred from the hostile tread of either, and, if necessary, to make the declaration good with her strong right arm.'

"7. That to the end Kentucky may be fully prepared for any contingency, 'we would have her arm herself thoroughly at the earliest practicable moment,' by regular legal action.

"8. That we look to the young men of the Kentucky State Guard as the bulwarks of the safety of our Commonwealth, and that we conjure them to remember that they are pledged equally to fidelity to the United States and Kentucky.

"9. That the Union and the Constitution, being mainly the work of southern soldiers and statesmen, in our opinion, furnishes a surer guarantee for 'southern rights' than can be found under any other system of government yet devised by man."

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*Action of Kentucky Respecting Federal Relations.*

January 21, 1861, Mr. George W. Ewing, representative from Logan county, laid before the House the following joint resolutions:

"*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That this General Assembly has heard with profound regret of the resolutions recently adopted by the States of New York, Maine, and Massachusetts, tendering men and money to the President of the United States to be used in coercing certain sovereign States of the South into obedience to the Federal Government.

"*Resolved*, That this General Assembly receives the action of the Legislatures of New York, Ohio, Maine, and Massachusetts as the indication of a purpose upon the part of the people of these States to further complicate existing difficulties by forcing the people of the South to the extremity of submission or resistance; and so regarding it, the Governor of the State of Kentucky is hereby requested to inform the Executives of each of said States that it is the opinion of this General Assembly that whenever the authorities of these States shall send armed forces to the South for the purpose indicated in said resolutions, the people of Kentucky, uniting with their brethren of the South, will, as one man, resist such invasion of the soil of the South at all hazards and to the last extremity."

The first resolution above was adopted—yeas 92, nays none; and the second was adopted—yeas 87, nays 6.

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Resolutions recommending call for a convention of the United States.

Whereas the people of some of the States feel themselves deeply aggrieved by the policy and measures which have been adopted by the people of some of the other States; and whereas an amendment of the Constitution of the United States is deemed indispensably necessary to secure them against similar grievances in the future: Therefore,

*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That application to Congress to call a convention for proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States, pursuant to the fifth article thereof, be, and the same is hereby, now made by this General Assembly of Kentucky; and we hereby invite our sister States to unite with us, without delay, in similar application to Congress.

*Resolved*, That the Governor of this State forthwith communicate the foregoing resolution to the President of the United States, with the request that he immediately place the same before Congress and the Executives of the several States, with the request that they lay them before their respective Legislatures.

*Resolved*, If the convention be called in accordance with the provisions of the foregoing resolutions, the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Kentucky suggest for the consideration of that convention, as a basis for settling existing difficulties, the adoption, by way of amendments to the Constitution, the resolutions offered in the Senate of the United States by Hon. John J. Crittenden.

Approved, January 25, 1861.

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Resolutions appointing commissioners to attend conference at Washington city, February 4, in accordance with the invitation of the Virginia Legislature.

Whereas, the General Assembly of Virginia, with a view to make an effort to preserve this Union and the Constitution in the spirit in which they were established by the fathers of the Republic, have, by resolution, invited all the States who are willing to unite with her in an earnest effort to adjust the present unhappy controversies, to appoint commissioners, to meet on the 4th February next, to consider, and, if practicable, agree upon some suitable adjustment.

*Resolved*, That we hereby accept the invitation of our old

mother Virginia, and that the following six commissioners, William O. Butler, J. B. Clay, J. F. Bell, C. S. Morehead, Charles A. Wickliffe, and James Guthrie, be appointed to represent the State of Kentucky in the contemplated convention; whose duty it shall be to repair to the city of Washington, on the day designated, to meet such commissioners as may be appointed by any of the States in accordance with the foregoing invitation.

*Resolved*, That if said commissioners shall agree upon any plan of adjustment requiring amendments to the Federal Constitution, they be requested to communicate the proposed amendments to Congress for the purpose of having the same submitted by that body, according to the forms of that Constitution, to the several States for ratification.

*Resolved*, That if said commissioners cannot agree in an adjustment, and, if agreeing, Congress shall refuse to submit for ratification such amendments as they may propose, the commissioners of this State shall immediately communicate the result to the Executive of this Commonwealth, to be by him laid before this General Assembly.

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of the General Assembly of Kentucky, the propositions embraced in the resolutions presented to the Senate of the United States by the Hon. John J. Crittenden, so construed that the first article proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States shall apply to all the territory of the United States now held or hereafter acquired, south of latitude 36° 30′, and provide that slavery of the African race shall be effectually protected as property therein during the continuance of the territorial government, and the fourth article shall secure to the owners of slaves the right of transit with their slaves between and through the non-slaveholding States and Territories, constitute the basis of such an adjustment of the unhappy controversy which now divides the States of this Confederacy as would be acceptable to the people of this Commonwealth.

*Resolved*, That the Governor be, and he is hereby, requested to communicate information of the foregoing appointment to the commissioners above named, at as early a day as practicable, and that he also communicate copies of the foregoing resolutions to the Executives of the respective States.

Approved January 29, 1861.

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Resolutions declaring further action by the Legislature on political affairs unnecessary and inexpedient at this time.

*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That the people of Kentucky view with the most lively apprehensions the dangers that now environ the Union and threaten its perpetuity.

*Resolved*, That we appeal to our southern brethren to stay the work of secession—to return and make one mighty effort to perpetuate the noble work of our forefathers, hallowed by the recollection of a thousand noble deeds.

*Resolved*, That we protest against the use of force or coercion by the General Government against the seceding States as unwise and inexpedient, and tending to the destruction of our common country.

*Resolved*, That as this General Assembly has made an application to Congress to call a national convention to amend the Constitution of the United States, and requested the Legislatures of all the other States to make similar applications, and has appointed commissioners to meet those which have been appointed by the State of Virginia, and such as may be appointed by other States, at a designated time and place, to consider and, if practicable, agree upon some suitable adjustment of the present unhappy controversy, it is unnecessary and inexpedient for this Legislature to take any further action on this subject at the present time; and as an evidence of the sincerity and good faith of our propositions for an adjustment, and our expression of devotion to the Union and desire for its preservation, Kentucky awaits with deep solicitude the responses from her sister States.

Approved February 11, 1861.

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An act to provide for the election of delegates to a convention to be held at Frankfort.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That an election shall be held, on the first Saturday in May next, at all the election precincts in this State, to elect twelve delegates to a convention of the border slave States, and such other slave States as have not passed ordinances of secession, to meet at Frankfort, Kentucky; and said delegates shall be voted for and elected by the State at large, in the same manner that State officers are now elected; and the same laws which apply to and regulate the mode of the election of State officers by the qualified voters of the whole State, shall apply to and govern the election of said delegates.

Sec. 2. That the persons who may be thus elected shall be commissioned by the Governor as delegates to said convention, and are empowered to meet the delegates from the States aforesaid, in convention, to consult on the critical condition of the country, and agree upon some plan of peaceable adjustment.

Sec. 3. The convention shall be held on the 27th of May next, or at such other time as a majority of the delegates elected in this State may appoint, to suit the convenience of the delegates from the other States.

Sec. 4. That one of the delegates to represent Kentucky in the border slave State convention shall be required to reside in each congressional district in this State.

Sec. 5. This act shall take effect from its passage.

Approved April 3, 1861.

May 16, 1861, the Committee on Federal Relations made the following report:

A majority of your committee, consisting of Messrs. Hodge, Burnam, Wolfe, Carlisle, Lyne, Gowdy, Jacobs, and Buckner, recommend the passage of the following preamble and resolutions:

Considering the deplorable condition of the country, and for which the State of Kentucky is in no way responsible, and looking to the best means of preserving the internal peace, and securing the lives, liberty, and property of the citizens of the State: Therefore,

*Resolved by the House of Representatives*, That this State and the citizens thereof shall take no part in the civil war now being waged, except as mediators and friends to the belligerent parties; and that Kentucky should, during the contest, occupy the position of strict neutrality; and your committee unanimously recommend the adoption of the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the act of the Governor in refusing to furnish troops or military force upon the call of the executive authority of the United States, under existing circumstances, is approved.

GEORGE B. HODGE, *Chairman*.

The first resolution above was adopted—yeas 69, nays 26; and the second—yeas 89, nays 4.

May 24, 1861, under a suspension of the rules, Mr. Bruner offered the following preamble and resolutions:

Whereas there exists a civil war between the national Government and the seceded States, which Kentucky deeply deplores; a war she had no voice in creating, and in which she has hitherto refused to take a part, and she now refuses. Being a part of the national Government, in the enjoyment of its benefits—such as mail facilities, national hospitals, Federal courts, protection at home and abroad, a garrison paid out of the national Treasury, into which she is paying revenue—and having a representation in Congress, Kentucky ought, at least, to remain neutral till the end of the controversy; neither hindering the national Government in the exercise of its authority, nor furnishing men, as a State, to either of the belligerents; nor asking aid from either to maintain her position; she will, all the time, be ready and anxious to mediate between the belligerents, and will be profoundly happy, should she be able to reconcile the contending parties, and arrest the shedding of fraternal blood by fraternal hands. With this position, Kentucky is willing to go before the civilized world and let her conduct pass into history, and await the candid and calm judgment of future and disinterested generations. Being connected with the seceded States geographically, and having the same domestic institution, she is unwilling to take up arms against them. Being attached to the national Government, under which she has always lived and greatly prospered, and having no cause for war against it, she cannot take up arms to overthrow it. Having in good faith taken this position, she asked the belligerents to respect it: Therefore,

1. *Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky*, That Kentucky will not sever her connection with the national Government, nor will she take up arms for either of the belligerent parties, but will arm herself for the one purpose of preserving tranquillity and peace within our own borders.

2. *Resolved*, That Kentucky now tenders, and to the end of the war all the time will tender, herself as mediator, and

that she will constantly be ready to do all in her power to bring about a just and honorable peace.

3. *Resolved*, That the Governor be directed to transmit a copy of the foregoing preamble and resolutions to the Presidents of the United States and of the seceded States, and to the Governors of each of the thirty-four States.

Adopted by the Senate—yeas 13, nays 9.

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*Letter from Hon. Garrett Davis.*

BALTIMORE, *April* 28, 1861.

DEAR SIR: Early last week I determined, upon my own reflection and impulse, to make a hurried run to Washington, to take a view of public affairs there, and from there; and to talk with the President and some of the members of his Cabinet in relation to our national troubles, and how the Administration intended to treat them.

* * * * * * * * * * *

That if Kentucky made no demonstration of force against the United States, he would not molest her. That he regretted the necessity of marching troops across Maryland, but forces to protect the seat of the United States Government could not be concentrated there without doing so; and he intended to keep open a line of communication through that State to Washington city, at any risk, but in a manner least calculated to irritate and inflame her people.

In this time of gloom and danger, when the nation is being rocked to its base, and so many States are leaping headlong into the abyss of revolution, it is the paramount duty of every true son of Kentucky to give all his efforts to save her from the fatal plunge, and thus keep away from her borders the most terrible of all scourges, a civil and servile war. Let her not become a party to this most unnecessary, unnatural, and revolting sectional strife. She had neither part nor lot in bring it on. It was precipitated by its arrogant authors without condescending to consult her, against her earnest remonstrances, and to put in peril all her interests, every hearthstone within her borders, and all her women and her children. Its flashes and thunders are gleaming and breaking in the southern horizon over the guilty heads of those who dared it, would have it, and there let it rage and waste its fury. There is no call of interest, of honor, or of duty upon us to rush into it and thus avert it from the South, and bring down its fury upon ourselves. Will we permit our sympathies for those who had none for us, or our reckless knight errantry, to intervene at the cost of having our fair and peaceful land ravaged with fire and sword?

Let Kentucky look to herself and her own self-preservation in this dread hour. Let her stand immovable as a rock peering above the tempest-tossed ocean, and as the red waves of war, from North or South, beat against her firm base, let her roll them back with all their desolation. To enable her to perform this difficult and perilous duty, let her clothe herself in full panoply. Let all her men and p her youths procure for themselves the most effective ar and then themselves form an independent organizatio companies, regiments, and divisions. Let them dril oughly, and always be ready to defend their hor their State from all enemies, within or without. L put themselves under the command of brave and fa men who are known to have no object but the defense an preservation of our Commonwealth and the reconstruction of the Union. Let us husband our resources and perfect our military organization, and when the contending parties become worn and wasted by a prolonged and bloody war, we can then effectively interfere to command a general peace.

Faithfully yours, GARRETT DAVIS.

GEORGE D. PRENTICE, Esq.

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The resolution was rejected by the following vote:

YEAS—Messrs. Davis, Dixon, Harlan, Howard, Howe, Lane of Indiana, Pomeroy, Sumner, Ten Eyck, Wade, and Wilkinson—11.

NAYS—Messrs. Anthony, Browning, Carlile, Clark, Cowan, Doolittle, Fessenden, Foot, Foster, Hale, Harris, Henderson, Kennedy, King, Lane of Kansas, Latham, McDougall, Nesmith, Pearce, Rice, Saulsbury, Stark, Thomson, Trumbull, Willey, Wilson of Massachusetts, Wilson of Missouri, and Wright—28.

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